

Wild

AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

10th
ANNIVERSARY

Conservation:
National Parks

Cape York
canoe
adventure

Bushwalking:
The Viking
Walls of Jerusalem
WA's Bibbulmun
Track
Dry your own food

Skiing:
Boots and
snow-camping
accessories
surveys
Snowy
Mountains
track notes

\$6.50* Winter (July-September) 1991, no 41

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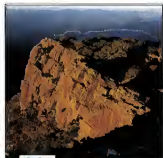
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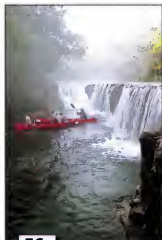
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Wild Shot

My skis runneth o'er



Cover Camping in the Snowy Mountains, NSW, is not all snow and blizzards—ski tourists enjoy a quiet moment after a long day on the Main Range. (For more on ski touring in the Snowy Mountains see David Noble's article starting on page 61.) Janusz Molinski

Right stuff for white stuff

Protect yourself from the vagaries of winter weather with Integral Clothing. See the 1991 range of this acclaimed multi-purpose apparel at your local Paddy Pallin store. Write for a free catalogue.

VERVE New Garment

Women at last have a rain shell made especially for them. With a higher waist, roomier hips and shorter sleeves, the Verve is designed to suit the female form far better than any unisex jacket.

Seamless shoulders, Watertight storm closure and fully protective hood keep the elements at bay. Articulated elbows, high-lift sleeves and waist draw-cord ensure that the Verve moves with you, not against you. Double storage-pockets are secured with zip and touch tape and backed up by hand-warmer. All pockets are accessible while wearing a rucksack.

The Verve—a garment with spirit and vitality.

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Colours: Blueberry, Teal
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VECTOR Restyled

The definitive anorak for free-heeters, cycle couriers and other fast movers. Completely overhauled this year with the inclusion of the radical Watertight closure. Now in soft, supple and rugged Scope Gore-Tex, the Vector has the strength to handle the rough-and-tumble.

The huge kangaroo pocket has restyled expansion bellows for ample storage. Hidden behind is a roomy hand-warmer muff. The hood, now with size adjustment, blocks the elements without cutting off your peripheral vision. Pre-bent elbows and high-lift sleeves with elastic/touch tape cuffs give you the freedom to really stretch out.

Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL
Colours: Blueberry/Teal/Red, Blue/Red/Teal
\$269



FURNACE

A multi-purpose jacket for trekkers, skiers and travellers. Good-looking for a night on the town, the Furnace has the warmth you need for mid-winter skiing and high treks.

The secret is the supple Intercept. This microfibre insulation traps a dense layer of warm air between the Exodus shell and the inner lining of either Drytech or Pertex.

The Furnace has two large chest-pockets and two cosy hand-warmer pockets. Adjustable draw-cords at waist and hem provide temperature control.

Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL
Colours: Sage/Red, Blue/Atlantis

NB Sage has Drytech lining while Blue has Pertex
\$259



FLAME Restyled

Almost a legend in its own lifetime, the Flame pullover has kept its wearers comfortably snug from the Arctic to Mongolia. This classic top has been redesigned this year with a two-tone colourway.

A roomy cut, combined with Plusline's stretch, gives un hindered movement for the upper body when skiing, climbing or flying a kite. Chilly weather can be sealed out with the adjustable hem and double-layer shawl collar, or these can be opened wide for maximum airflow.

The deep, zippered kangaroo pocket safely stows compasses, Minities, or tickets to the opera. Frosty fingers will love the hand-warmer pocket. This practical pullover will quickly become your favourite top.

Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL
Colours: Ebony/Sage, Red/Sage
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Design refinements include a sculptured collar that's snug without being too tight around the neck. A double-layer front adds warmth and features two hand-warmer pockets and a chest storage-pocket with angled zip for easy access. The Plusline cuffs and hem have natural stretch and dry fast.

A full-length RiRi zip makes the Fire especially suited for changes in tempo.

Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL
Colours: Blue, Atlantis
\$149

GORE-TEX OPs Restyled

Sophisticated leg-protection for skiing and climbing. These tailored overpants feature articulated knees, anatomically shaped for flamboyant manoeuvres. Now full length, the RiRi side zips give ready access when wearing skis or crampons. Double storm flaps are secured with touch tape. The waist has a high-cut back, elasticated for a snug fit, with PosiLok front adjustment. Cordura scuff patches have been added to guard the inleg from bike chains and ski edges.

Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL
Colours: Red/Teal
\$269

NB Because of limitations in the printing process, actual garment colours may vary from those shown.

Paddy Pallin

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DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

Making things happen for wilderness

A recent viewing of the popular film *Dances with Wolves* stirred me to think about our attitude to minority groups, particularly, of course, North American Indians—their plight being the focus of the film—and also our own Aborigines, among others. It also made me ponder our ignorance, arrogance and insensitivity, particularly in relation to the environment. Most of all, it forcibly reminded me how many of the attitudes society now takes for granted as right and normal were once minority viewpoints. What is more, those who voiced them—sometimes just one individual—were usually despised, reviled and persecuted by the majority who upheld what was then the conventional wisdom. Further, this tiny minority often came from a disadvantaged group on the margins of society. But ironically, it is often the case that the more 'respectable', entrenched and institutionalized a position is, the more unacceptable it subsequently appears to later, more enlightened generations.

Worthwhile change rarely has the support of a popular movement at its outset. To the contrary, it is frequently resisted. Often unfairly, vigorously and harshly. Those seeking to introduce it must accept that, at best, they are likely to be alone and discouraged. The same is as true today as it was in the past. It is not easy being a Martin Luther King, an Emily Pankhurst, a Ralph Nader or a Bob Brown. Even if you were successful in attracting a following, the chances are that you'd pay a high personal price and remain a pariah in the eyes of large sections of the community. Standing up to be

counted often brings us into the firing line, which, of course, has its share of pitfalls. Without people prepared to take such a step, however, it is unlikely that worthwhile change will be achieved.

It seems to me that no less than the future of our planet depends on what is done (or not done) by our generation. So now is the right time for us all to dare to be different and to swim against the tide of those who advocate economic development at any cost. We can start from right where we are and raise our personal 'conservation profile'. Some will feel they can emulate Bob Brown, whereas others will respond differently and less dramatically. Whatever level of increased commitment we choose, two things are certain: first, it is a step in the right direction; and second, it won't make life any easier for us, particularly in the short term. (The first line of *Wildfire* in *Wild* no 40 reminds us that every stance has its price.) Now we, a generation born into uncommonly comfortable circumstances, are presented with the chance of a lifetime. If the opportunity to do something now doesn't offer true adventure in its fullest sense, then I'm not sure what does. To underline the gravity of the situation, as we went to press the Federal Government announced its intention to capitulate completely to the demands of its sagging political fortunes and utterly abandon the green support that helped it to the power. It will proceed with its resource security legislation and thus ring the death knell for our remaining forests. With apologies to Karl Marx: we have nothing to lose but *their* chain-saws!



Chris accepts the challenge below Mackays Peak, the Grampians, Victoria. Left, *Wild* cards in all their glory—in colour.

Wild no 40

As announced in *Wild* no 40, we substantially raised our print run for this tenth anniversary special issue. But that was not enough, it seems. My sincere apologies to those who had to wait longer for their copies than we'd have liked. I'd also like to thank the many readers who contacted us with congratulations on our tenth anniversary and gave generous praise for the newly designed special issue to mark the occasion—it seems you like it! Not only will the new design continue but, in accordance with our policy of offering our readers more whenever possible, the special protective cover lamination which was so appreciated on *Wild* no 40 will be retained.

Wild Cards

In describing this new product in the *Wild* Things brochure which is bound in this issue (and in *Wild* no 40), we omitted to mention that these uniquely *Wild* cards are printed in superb full colour, as you can now see from the photo. ■



Chris Baxter
Managing Editor

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Photo by: Jonathan Wright

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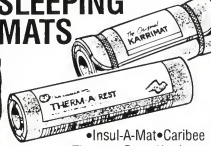
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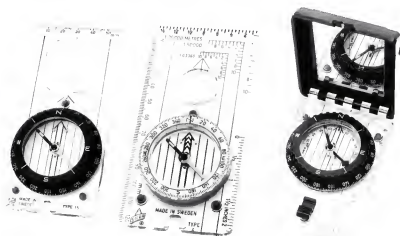
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NEW SKI FEES THIS WINTER

'User pays' for Nordic trails in Victoria

Fee for Service?

Victoria's Alpine Resorts Commission will this year introduce 'trail-head fees', to be paid by Nordic skiers who use groomed trails within most of the State's alpine resorts—including Mt Stirling and Lake Mountain (see *Information*, Wild no 40). Predictably, this move has aroused the ire of a number of skiers. Whilst it is ostensibly in line with the government's 'user pays' policy, there are those who question whether this is really the case, given that Nordic skiers already pay the regulation fee to enter these resorts in the first place. Surely, they say, it costs no more to maintain Nordic trails than to operate the many other facilities, required by downhill skiers, which Nordic skiers seldom use. In support of the move, the ARC has published figures which demonstrate the cost of maintaining and servicing cross-country trails. Corresponding figures for downhill slope management are unavailable.

As well, many ski tourers question whether the facilities provided—at Mt Stirling, in particular—improve the skiing experience or detract from it; and, therefore, whether the cost of providing them is justified at all. There is no doubt that the grooming of trails, for example, must be carried out to a high standard if it is not to be counter-productive—bad trails are often worse than none at all—and, even when carried out properly, is of questionable value on a mountain with some remaining wilderness character, such as Mt Stirling. In short, many Nordic skiers resent paying for something they'd prefer not to have.

The ARC hopes to persuade skiers that the scheme is equitable. The basic fee charged for a day on the trails will be \$5.00 for persons over 15 and \$2.00 for students, pensioners and others up to age 15. A 'season's pass', valid at all resorts, will cost \$80. There will be provision, we are assured, for rates to be adjusted for various groups according to circumstances. The fees will not be levied for the use of trails which primarily give access from within the resort to surrounding areas; the High Plains road at Falls Creek is perhaps the best example. Nor will they apply—in 1991, at least—at Mt Buller or Mt Baw Baw.

The Ski Touring Association of Victoria does not oppose the idea that skiers who wish to ski on well-groomed trails should pay for the privilege, but shares some of the concerns mentioned above about the way the amount charged has been calculated and foresees many difficulties in fair implementation of the scheme. STAV, too, is concerned that many skiers may be obliged to pay for facilities they do not want; it is also adamant that those who pay the fee should receive a high standard of service in return.



What price groomed trails? On Mt Stirling, Victoria. Glenn van der Knijff

It seems that many questions remain to be answered before Victorian ski tourers can be confident that trail-head fees are a good thing. Many in New South Wales will be watching future developments with interest.

South-west Tracks Realigned

The Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage is in the process of upgrading and repairing the South Coast Track. Large sections have been relocated, but seldom far from the original route. Between Cox Bight and Melaleuca, however, the track now leaves the beach at its western end (not at Point Eric, as before) and skirts the foot of the New Harbour Range. Walking time is reduced by between 30 minutes and an hour, which compensates for the additional beach bash required.

The department recently re-routed a nine kilometre stretch of the track from Farmhouse Creek to Federation Peak, thereby protecting Wangata Mena (Judds Cavern). The new section begins near Rainforest Camp in the South Picton Saddle and rejoins the old route opposite VMTC Camp. There is a good campsite beside a log-crossing over the South Cracroft River and several rougher sites near small creeks. The track has been taped and

cleared only where necessary and is of a rough standard, in keeping with the remainder of the route. It avoids two crossings of the West Cracroft River and, as a consequence, will be safer than the old track when the streams are flooded.

For other news see below, and see also the Green Pages in this issue.

John Chapman

Tiger Tracks

A long day out in January 1990 surely entitles Rob Taylor of Natimuk, Victoria, to a place among the ranks of the tiger walkers. Taylor began his odyssey at the junction of the Howitt Plains road and the Mt Howitt walking track, and walked or ran to Mt Howitt, across the Crosscut Saw to Mt Speculation, the Razor, the Viking, Barry Saddle, Rileys Creek, down to the Wonnangatta River, Dry River and up to Howitt Hut. He completed the climb from Dry River in darkness because of a 'late' start and after slowing down because of dehydration on 'the dry Barries'; he reports having been 'very glad to reach the water tank at Barry Saddle'. Taylor took 13½ hours for the trip. Over a distance on the map of at least 60 kilometres, with 3000 metres lost and gained, it is usually undertaken as a four-day walk. Aged 50, Taylor is the general practitioner in Natimuk, the small town closest to Mt Arapiles, and is also a rockclimber.

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Photos, Courtesy Ian Martin



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LEAD BY INNOVATION

Crime Report

Are the days of trusting other bushwalkers behind us? Over the summer of 1990-91 one walker had a sleeping bag stolen from a hut; another left his pack beside a track while on a side trip, only to find it gone on his return; cars parked near the Walls of Jerusalem were burgled; money and cameras have been stolen.

JC

Corporate Climbing

Mountaineers Peter Hillary and Greg Mortimer are evidently among those who believe that the lessons learned in the mountains can be transferred to other arenas. In March, Hillary—who during 1990 climbed Mt Everest (8872 metres), the world's highest mountain—addressed the inaugural 'Corporate Scouts' leadership luncheon, organized by the Scout Association for the Melbourne business community. An entry charge of \$65 a head entitled those present to 'a few tips on making it to the top'. Fresh from his success in August 1990 on K2 (8611 metres), the world's second-highest peak, Mortimer (who climbed Mt Everest in 1984) apparently plans to establish a scheme for teaching company executives to overcome challenges with skills learned in outdoor activities. They'll need to be fast learners: Mortimer is planning an expedition to Makalu (8481 metres, Nepal, in March 1992).

Corrections and Amplifications

The list of display advertisers in *Wild* no 1 which appears on page 38 of *Wild* no 40 includes Snowgum Imports under the heading of those now defunct. That business, which imported XCD accessories, is not to be confused with Snowgum Adventure Wear, which manufactures clothing and is trading actively—see the advertisement on page 22 of *Wild* no 40. Similarly, the defunct Melbourne retailer Armadale Outdoors in the same list is not to be confused with New South Wales retailer Armadale Outdoors, which is trading actively.

The *Wild* Shot in *Wild* no 40 was reproduced with permission from *Australian Geographic*, which was a sponsor of the K2 expedition pictured and will be publishing an article on the climb. *Australian Geographic* has been perhaps the major sponsor of Australian adventure exploits in recent years, sometimes for relatively little return.

The announcement of the new *Wild* greeting cards in *Wild* no 40 and in this issue omits to mention that the cards are, of course, printed in full colour.

The survey of Australian Himalayan climbs in *Wild* no 40 omitted Peter Crocker's name from the 1978 Dunagiri expedition. It also stated that 11 climbers reached 8600 metres on Mt Everest in 1988. In fact, eight climbers reached 8500 metres. Two items not included were Richard Baker's unsuccessful Australian expedition to a 7000 metre Indian peak in 1989 and Mark Wilson's reaching 6500 metres on Ama Dablam with a US expedition in 1990.

In Equipment, *Wild* no 40 (page 97), we mentioned that duty had been reduced to 10% on inner sheets and sleeping bag stuff sacks. We didn't mention the more significant point that the same reduction applies to sleeping

bags, which should result in their retail prices falling by 10%.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Community Service?

The 15 inmates of the Alice Springs jail have been hard at work building a 220 kilometre walking track from Simpsons Gap to the Telegraph Station.

JC

NEW SOUTH WALES

Born-again Climber

Dot Butler first climbed the second of the Three Sisters, in the Blue Mountains, in 1940. In October 1990, in her 80th year, she returned there with Peter Treseder and Steve Irwin and climbed it again. She thus almost certainly became Australia's oldest active rock climber, and is reported to have found the climbing sufficiently enjoyable to contemplate resuming it on a regular basis. The ABC filmed the ascent for a television documentary which was intended for screening early in 1991. A profile of Dot Butler appeared in *Wild* no 36.

Dolphins in the Nymboida?

In February 1991 Peter Treseder completed what is believed to have been the first continuous descent of the Nymboida River, in northern NSW—and was almost certainly the fastest. He started at the headwaters of the river, at Barren Mountain on the New England Tableland, ran 50 kilometres to Platypus Flat, then canoed the remaining 388 kilometres to Yamba breakwater. He completed the trip in 3 days 14 hours, and reported that the highlight was having the company of two dolphins which swam beside his canoe for the final hour.

Beth Treseder

Popular Mt Solitary

Further to David Noble's article 'Blue Mountains Peaks', in *Wild* no 40, the indistinct track on the east side of Mt Solitary, as shown on the Jamison topographic map, has now disappeared completely. A track has recently been cleared and marked nearby. This reaches the valley road about half a kilometre east of the blazed tree which marks the spot where the old track used to be. It is also possible to leave the marked track and follow a fairly straightforward, narrow spur down to the Kedumba River.

The water supply on the mountain is unreliable. Chinamans Gully usually contains some small pools, but these dry out rapidly without rain. Flakes from stone implements have been found in the main rock shelter in the gully; there is a good deal of 'imitation Aboriginal art' here, as well as a couple of hand stencils that may be authentic.

A popular walk that can be done in three days begins in Katoomba, crosses Mt Solitary from east to west, and then ends at Wentworth Falls.

Neil Paton

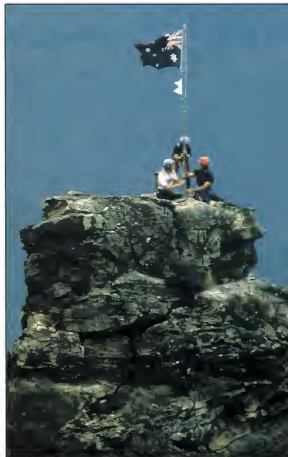
Geographic Opening

Billy tea and damper were served at the March opening of the Australian Geographic Shop, in Sydney's York Street. The originator of the

venture, entrepreneur and adventurer Dick Smith, was on hand with encouraging words for our hard times.

Gear Freaks' Bonanza

The Bike Outdoor & Adventure show, to be held at the Sydney Exhibition Centre on 25-27 October, sounds like a must for all you gear



Dot Butler, flanked by Peter Treseder (left) and Steve Irwin, raises the flag atop the Second Sister, Blue Mountains, NSW, 50 years after first making the ascent. Australian Broadcasting Commission

freaks out there, with 'the most extensive range of bicycle and outdoor equipment from Australian and international manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers'.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The Show Must Go On

The 1991 Ski & Outdoor Trade Show will be held at Canberra's National Convention Centre on 8-11 October, for the trade only: enquiries phone (03) 384 1702.

VICTORIA

The Big Time

Victoria's Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club has won approval to hold the first World Lopsett cross-country skiing event in the Southern hemisphere. To be held at Falls Creek, Victoria, in August, it is hoped that the event will attract 500 skiers from overseas as well as local hopefuls.

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See *Wild* survey in issue no 39

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Photo: Glenn van der Kolk

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Murray Marathon

Last December, as in each of the previous 21 years, a flotilla of canoes and kayaks negotiated the Murray River between Yarrowonga and Swan Hill in the five-day Murray Ultra Canoe Marathon. Last year for the first time, the course was also completed by several rowing sculls. The event raised \$148 000 for the Red Cross.

Despite the heavy snowfalls of winter 1990 and floods earlier in the year, the river level was low and the currents sluggish. The weather was hot; a temperature of 40° was recorded on the last day. (When attempting to cool off, one paddler plucked a snake from the water.) Many of the roads used for access by ground crews had been at the centre of grass fires the day before, but the race proceeded without interference. Tocumwal, at the end of the first day's paddling, was seriously affected by fires just a week later.



Caroline Mews on the run during the 1991 Subaru Summer Classic. **Right:** New Zealand's Steve Gurney, who will go into the Winter Classic, the second in a series of three endurance events, in second place. **Matt Darby**

There were 604 entrants. First and second on handicap were Anthony O'Loughlin and Trevor Butcher, respectively, both in TK1s. Third (again) was the Waters family in a K4. Fourth were Tony and Merrill Meek in a TK2 and fifth was Chris Le Dieu in a K1. For information regarding the 1991 Murray Marathon, to be held on 27–31 December, ring Glenn Lawless of the Red Cross—(03) 616 9999.

Liz Dawson

The Three Seasons—a New Classic

This year for the first time, the Subaru-Peregrine Winter Classic endurance event will be open to individual competitors as well as to teams of up to six members. It will be held on the weekend of 27–28 July around Mt Hotham and Omeo and will, as usual, comprise two days of cross-country skiing, cycling, running and canoeing over a total distance of 154 kilometres. Again for the first time, the 1991 Winter Classic will be part of a series of endurance events along with a Summer Classic, held on Victoria's west coast during

Plains, was removed in early summer 1990. There are no plans to replace it. Walkers can expect all shelter huts in the South-west to be removed in the near future.

JC

Distant Thunder

Following successful trials in Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, solar-powered composting toilets have been installed at Lake Vera and Lake Tahune on the Frenchmans Cap track.

JC



March, and a Spring Classic, from Mt Kosciuszko to Canberra on 5–7 October. After the running of the Summer Classic, Victoria's David Flockart, New Zealand's Steve Gurney and Rod Hislop from New South Wales head the table of points.

Getting Air

Peter Campbell, co-author of 'Cross Country Downhill Skiing' in *Wild* no 17 and long-time adrenalin addict (see the Wild Shot in this issue), was nearly brought undone by his craving in its most recent form. In December 1990, while undergoing instruction on the last day of a six-day course in paragliding, Campbell attempted to abort his take-off in uneven wind conditions. He was lifted about three metres in the air and several metres backwards, then dropped. He landed on his back, arms outstretched, breaking both wrists but fortunately escaping more serious injury. Campbell is reported to have sworn not to leave the ground in future unless wearing skis.

TASMANIA

No Shelter

The three-sided shelter which stood for decades at Junction Creek, on the Arthur

Challenge On Again

The second Tasmanian Winter Challenge (see Information, *Wild* no 39) will be held on 18 August 1991 near Mount Field. For further information contact Jill How—telephone (002) 23 4466.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Helena Valley Map

The Western Australian Rogaining Association conducted its spring 12-hour rogaine for 1990 in the historic Helena River valley, just east of Perth. It has subsequently reissued the 1:25 000 rogaining map of the district with points of interest marked, and has also produced a short pamphlet on the history of the area. Map and notes can be obtained for \$5.00 from Caron Marketing Group, 8 Colin St, West Perth, WA 6005—phone (09) 321 9122.

OVERSEAS

March of the Slav

In March 1991 Slovenian alpinist Slave Svetic put in an extraordinary burst of solo climbing amongst New Zealand's highest peaks. According to a bulletin from the Alpine Association of Slovenia, on 1 and 2 March

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Inner Tent
 Height: 120 cm
 Length: 210 cm
 Width: 250 cm
 Weight of tent complete: 4.6 kg



ODYSSEY 300
Inner Tent
 Height: 100 cm
 Length: 220 cm
 Width: 150 cm
 Weight of tent complete: 3.9 kg

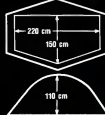


ODYSSEY 200
Inner Tent
 Height: 100 cm
 Length: 220 cm
 Width: 150 cm
 Weight of tent complete: 3.7 kg



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Inner Tent
 Height: 110 cm
 Length: 220 cm
 Width: 150 cm
 Weight of tent complete: 1.9 kg



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WILD INFORMATION

Svetitsic repeated the Central Gullies and the Yankee-Kiwi Couloir on the South Face of Mt Hicks (3218 metres). Between 14 and 17 March he established two new routes on Mt Cook (3766 metres): the Yugoslav Route, on the Caroline Face; and the Slovenian Route—described as 'probably the most difficult combined route in New Zealand'—the location of which is uncertain. On 19 March, he climbed the Balfour Face of Mt Tasman (3500 metres) twice: by the original route and by the new Slovenian Route. All these were solo ascents. For good measure, Svetitsic joined New Zealander Peter Dickson on the first ascent of a Direttissima on the South-east Face of Mt Fastness (2375 metres), near Mt Aspiring.

Ticket to the Ball

A new, private hut has been constructed in Mt Cook National Park to facilitate the reopening of the Ball Pass crossing. The new Caroline Hut, at a height of 1768 metres on the Ball Ridge, was installed, and is used, by Alpine Recreation Canterbury as an overnight stop for guided walks and as a base for climbing instruction. Ball Pass, first crossed in 1890 by G E Manning and A P Harper, was a popular route until the mid-1970s, when the last of a series of huts was destroyed by glacial recession.

Tele Till You're Jelly

On 4 June 1990 three members of a group known (to themselves, at any rate) as Australians with an Urge to Ski McKinley and Canada on Telemark Skis (AUSMAC 90) reached the summit of Mt McKinley (6194 metres), Alaska, by the West Buttress route. The three—Nic Bendeli, Scot Ruddock and Keith Williams—apparently then made the 4000 metre descent to the Kahiltna Glacier on Telemark skis, an exercise which they described as 'hard work' but well worth while for the 100 000 square kilometre panorama of Alaska's peaks.

Kenya Mountain Rescue Appeal

The Mt Kenya Mountain Rescue Foundation is appealing for resources—in particular, equipment and funds to enable Kenyans to attend courses on mountain rescue and first aid. Mountain rescue in Kenya is the responsibility of park wardens, whose main role is to manage parks and protect wildlife from poachers. They have limited mountain-rescue facilities. Donations (in pounds sterling) can be sent to Kenya Mountain Rescue, PO Box 672, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S8 0DJ, UK.

High Notes

If *Wild* were to review recorded music, one album high on the list might well be K2: *Tales of Triumph and Tragedy* by British keyboard player Don Airey. Inspired by the 1986 expedition that put Alan Rouse on the summit of K2 (8611 metres) and cost the lives of Rouse and two other climbers, the album includes songs such as 'Voice of the Mountain', 'Balti Lament' and 'Death Zone/White-out'. It is dedicated to 'rock stars who go up and don't come down'. ■

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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RESOURCE SECURITY

Conservationists rally against an environmental disaster



Nature Destruction Legislation

Major conservation organizations are adamant that the Federal Government has finally done irreparable damage to the privileged relationship it once held with the environment movement. The last straw was the announcement by the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, in the government's March industry statement, of his support for legislation to ensure 'resource security' for 'value-adding projects'. The volume of timber deemed necessary to sustain woodchipping and pulp-milling operations, considered one at a time, will be allocated from native forests, and access to it will be guaranteed. Heritage and environmental values of the forests will be assessed before each project is approved; once done, though, State and Federal Governments will be committed to providing an agreed amount of timber, regardless of new evidence of high conservation value.

Since last year, similar legislation has operated in Victoria and Tasmania, and it is being considered in New South Wales. In November 1990 the Victorian Government granted 15-year licences to timber companies to extract saw-logs from native forests; it is widely acknowledged that many of these logs end up as woodchips at times of low demand for high-grade timber. In September the Tasmanian Government decided to allocate 1.1 million hectares of public forests permanently for wood production.

While conservation groups insist that the timber industry should 'grow its own', State and Federal Governments seem determined to guarantee the right to cut down forests on public land.

Heritage Plan up for Comment

The World Heritage Area of western Tasmania occupies 20% of the State, includes some of

What kind of resource? Mountain ash forest, Alpine National Park, Victoria. *Wayne Maher*

Australia's most spectacular and unusual wilderness and is used for a wide range of recreational pursuits.

In May the Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage released a draft management plan for the area, which already incorporates much public comment received during 1990. Now the draft plan is available for comment, and the department is eager to hear the views of individuals and groups who are concerned about the area. Submissions will be accepted until mid-July, and a final plan, taking account of the comments received, will be prepared later in 1991.

A summary of the draft plan with a questionnaire attached, or a copy of the complete document, can be obtained by writing to the World Heritage Area Planning

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Bushwalkers and people whose main concern is conservation are almost invariably outnumbered by other groups—notably recreational four-wheel-drive users—when it comes time to comment on plans for public land. There's some truth in the assertion that 'we get the parks we deserve'. All *Wild* readers are encouraged to obtain a copy of the draft plan, in full or in summary, and contribute to the future management of this magnificent region. (See also Wildfire on page 87.)

Forest Appeal

The Australian Conservation Foundation launched its annual appeal for 1991 with a call for help in securing protection for those old-growth forests that remain in all parts of the country. On Fraser Island, Queensland, in south-eastern New South Wales, in Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia—especially with the advent of resource security legislation—forests face serious and immediate threats.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Kakadu Still in the Balance

The release of the Resource Assessment Commission's draft findings on the Conservation Zone in Kakadu National Park did little to resolve the debate about the area's future. Those keen to see mining at the Coronation Hill site apparently saw little in the report to change their views, while for conservationists

Australian economy: a surprisingly low \$82 million. The pro-mining lobby challenged the validity of both these conclusions. Conservationists, on the other hand, disputed the report's finding that 'with...notable except-

aged to write as soon as possible to the Prime Minister, The Hon R J Hawke, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2601, to express support for the protection of all of Stage Three of Kakadu National Park.



Four-wheel-drive damage near Mt Cameron, Wollemi National Park, New South Wales. **Above right:** Wolgan River four-wheel-drive track, Blue Mountains, NSW. David Noble

the opposite message was equally clear: no mines. The report endorsed the opposition of the Jawoyn people to mining on their traditional land. It also produced an estimate of the monetary value of the mine to the

...there is an adequate body of information to allow for informed comments and judgements about the potential impact of mining at Coronation Hill on the resources of the Conservation Zone'. Such knowledge as does exist, they say, confirms the ecological significance of the area and renders unacceptable any risk of damage. The fate of Kakadu remains in the hands of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Readers are encour-

Logging and Export Challenged

The Northern Territory Environment Centre continues to campaign against a proposal to log two tree species, lancewood and gutta percha, from a large area in central NT. *Conservation News*, April 1990, reported that the Resource Assessment Commission would investigate the controversial project in the course of its forest resources inquiry, and that legal action against the Federal Minister for Resources was likely to proceed with funding from the New South Wales Legal Aid Commission. This would challenge the propriety of the granting of a Commonwealth export licence on the basis of the three Preliminary Environment Reports prepared by the logging company involved.

NEW SOUTH WALES

New National Park

Sydney has a new National Park. Garigal National Park consists of 786 hectares adjacent to Kuring-gai Chase National Park in the city's northern suburbs. It contains bushland, gorges, waterfalls and relics of the one-time Aboriginal inhabitants of the area, after whom it is named. (See Wildfire on page 85.)

Blue Mountains Threat

Conservationists are worried that many of the fire tracks within Blue Mountains and Wollemi National Parks will be left open despite advice from the National Parks and Wildlife Service to close and revegetate them. The Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, has delayed implementing the draft management plans for both parks, which

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recommend that many of the tracks which penetrate into core wilderness areas be closed. These roads have little practical value for fire management.

Recreational four-wheel-drive owners have lobbied the minister to keep some of these roads open. One report suggests that four-wheel-drive clubs might be given keys to gates on some tracks. If left open, tracks such as the Wirraba Trail which cross the heart of the Colo-Hunter wilderness in Wollemi National Park would seriously compromise the integrity of the largest remaining wilderness area in NSW.

David Noble

Nattai Wilderness Logging

Wollondilly Shire Council is considering an application for logging and farming developments near the junction of the Allum and Nattai Rivers, in the heart of the Nattai wilderness. The proposal concerns a block of leasehold land in the area, which forms part of the catchment for Lake Burrigorang, Sydney's main water supply.

Conservation groups have criticized the proposal, which they claim would have a severe impact on the integrity of the wilderness area. The Nattai wilderness was nominated by the Colong Foundation some time ago, but the National Parks and Wildlife Service is yet to finalize its report on the area.

Roger Lembit

Management Plan Threat

Conservation groups claim that legislative changes proposed by the NSW Minister for the Environment would seriously threaten the current system of management planning for National Parks.

The changes would allow either House of Parliament to disallow provisions of management plans, avoiding the public consultation procedures in place at present. This could facilitate the virtual demolition of management plans by developers. In Kosciusko National Park, in particular, the development lobby has consistently pushed for the right to create facilities which would degrade the natural values of the park; conservationists are pessimistic about what might happen if the government were to review the present plan of management.

RL

Cars or Nature?

The administrators of Kosciusko National Park expect to spend \$1 million during 1991-92 to upgrade the Alpine Way between Snowy Plains Park and Thredbo—more than the annual budget for nature conservation in the entire park.

Brian Walters

Environmental Law

The Environmental Defender's Office is a non-profit public interest legal centre which specializes in environmental law. It organizes seminars—one of the most recent was entitled 'Towards a New Forestry Act for NSW'—and publishes various papers, including a quarterly journal, *Impact*. Enquiries should be directed to Environmental Defender's Office, Suite 82, 280 Pitt St, Sydney, NSW 2000, or telephone (02) 261 3599.

VICTORIA

Victorian Wilderness at the Crossroads

The few remaining areas of wilderness in Victoria are currently under the spotlight of the Land Conservation Council, the Victorian Government's public land-use planning body. As part of an investigation of wilderness in Victoria, the LCC published a descriptive report in February 1990, and its proposed recommendations were released for public comment just as this issue of *Wild* went to press. Several aspects of these recommendations are extremely unsettling, and a major conservation campaign will be needed to prevent the permanent loss of areas of high wilderness quality.

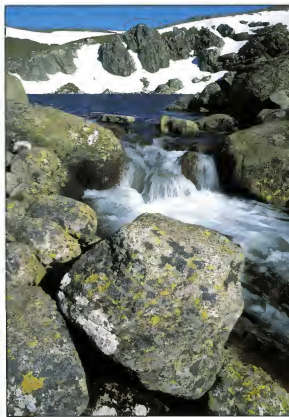
First, though, why is the LCC important, and how is it constituted? The LCC was set up under the Land Conservation Act in 1970 to carry out investigations and make recommendations to the government on the use of public land, in order to ensure the balanced use of land in Victoria. Its recommendations are important because they are usually accepted, with occasional modifications, by both the Government and the Opposition. The latter is particularly important because the Opposition has the numbers in the Legislative Council and can therefore block or modify legislation which must be passed before new National Parks and wilderness areas can be declared.

The LCC has 14 members, the majority (eight) of whom are heads of government departments. Five of these are from the Department of Conservation & Environment: one is the head of the Forest Products Management Division (the remnant of the old Forests Commission) and another is the Director of National Parks. Other members include the heads of the departments responsible for mining, agriculture and regional planning; a number of non-government representatives drawn from among primary producers, the world of commerce and municipal councils; and two more selected for their expertise in natural resource conservation. There is a chairman, who is also Commissioner for the Environment. Only three of the council's members—the Director of National Parks and the two non-government natural resource experts—might be expected to have wilderness protection as one of their major objectives or to represent a 'constituency' interested in wilderness conservation. As for the others...

Over the last 20 years, the recommendations of the LCC have led to substantial increases in the size of areas reserved as National Parks or wilderness. However, in some cases these have been established at the expense of fundamental National Park principles: by the use of land-use planning compromises such as 'once-only logging' of National Parks, and by deferring the proclamation of some of the forested parts of parks so that they can be logged before they officially become a reserve. The Alpine National Park is the saddest example: it will be at least another eight years before some of the 'late additions' are converted to fire-blackened stump-fields and subsequently added to the park.

The Victorian Government policy objective on wilderness protection, as described in the

State Conservation Strategy, is to 'preserve remaining areas of high wilderness quality'. Given that the government's representatives form the majority of the LCC, one might hope that the council would recommend legislating to achieve that objective. Yet the proposed recommendations fall well short of endorsing full protection of all wilderness in legislated wilderness areas. For example, at least one major



Blue Lake Creek at its source: Blue Lake, Kosciusko National Park, NSW. Geoff Woods

area of high wilderness quality has been split into two solely to allow access for recreational four-wheel-drive vehicles, and Cowombat Flat is to remain accessible to them. It is alleged that large areas of high wilderness quality in the Mallee, which could have been recommended for inclusion in reserved wilderness areas, were withheld to avoid the perception that National Parks in the Mallee contain too high a proportion of wilderness. And the timber industry is likely to be well pleased with the proposed recommendations, since it appears that the LCC has held back from anything that would halt the continued felling of remoter native forests.

In 1989 both Houses of Parliament approved the legislation that amended the National Parks Act to prohibit mining and mineral exploration in National Parks. With the exception of two proposed additions to the Big Desert wilderness area in north-western Victoria, all the wilderness areas nominated by the LCC are within existing National Parks. One might therefore expect the council to recommend that mineral exploration not be permitted in wilderness areas. However, even this is not the case.

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There is now be an urgent need for all wilderness users to seek the protection of the last few scraps of wilderness left in Victoria. Copies of the proposed recommendations are available free of charge from the Information Victoria Bookshop, 318 Little Bourke St, Melbourne, the Department of Planning and Housing, 477 Collins St, Melbourne, and regional offices of the DCE, or mailed, for \$4.00, from the Law Printer, PO Box 203, North Melbourne, Vic 3051. Public submissions on any part of the proposals will be accepted until 24 July 1991.

A Wrong Turn?

The Victorian National Parks Association expressed concern at the transfer early in 1991 of the LCC and the Environment Protection Authority from the Department of Planning & Urban Growth to the Department of Conservation & Environment. Both authorities have long been important sources of independent advice to the State Government on matters which directly affect the DCE's operation. The VNPA questioned whether they would still be able to maintain the degree of independence required.

The Cost of Logging

The ACF has released a study which shows that the net government subsidy to the Victorian timber industry for the logging of native forests is \$41 million annually. This is the amount by which the government's expenditure exceeds the royalties it receives. Other conservation groups have confirmed that their research indicates similar levels of subsidy.

In response, the Department of Conservation & Environment, which is responsible for supervising Victorian logging, admitted that there is in effect a subsidy, but said that the figure of \$41 million is too high. The department was not able to provide a figure of its own.

Government policy is to receive a 4% return on funds invested in the forestry industry. At present, however, it appears that the destruction of native forests is being subsidized by taxpayers' funds so that a private profit can be made. The ACF has called for an inquiry into the economics of the timber industry.

BW

Not Seeing the Forest for Trees?

A full-colour brochure, 'The Great Forests of Victoria', inserted in Melbourne's *Sunday Age* newspaper by Victoria's Department of Conservation & Environment last November, boldly starts by asserting, 'Our forests are vast. And they are growing.' By this, the department (which is responsible for the administration of logging—sorry, 'harvesting'—in Victoria) would like us to accept that not only are the trees getting taller but that the area under forest is increasing. This latter implication surprised us. The truth of the matter depends to a large extent on what you call 'forest'.

Director of Forests Kevin Waring informed us that some 12 000 hectares of native forest are 'harvested' each year. He also said that most of this area is 'reseeded' in the same year. In the year 1989-90, for example, 11 816 hectares were thus 'regenerated' and 1143

hectares (including 728 hectares which were planted) of hardwood were 'reforested'. This all sounds well and good for the future of our forests until you remember that the department aims for a 60% rate of regeneration, and often achieves only half, or less, of even this low rate.

Camel Rape

Camels Hump's rocky promontory on Mt Macedon has been appreciated by generations of walkers and climbers for its spectacular rock formations and delicate snow gum glades. Until recently, an unobtrusive foot-track zigzagged from the car-park for the few hundred metres to its rocky summit. However, it has now been 'upgraded' to an ugly vehicle track which serves no apparent purpose. Not only that, a side-track has also been bulldozed and the once uniquely beautiful saddle near the Omega block filled with fallen trees and mounds of earth. Presumably the body which administers the area, Victoria's Department of Conservation & Environment, has struck again.

Papering over the Cracks

The Wilderness Society sent a representative to an international conference on bleached kraft pulp-mills, held in Melbourne during February. He was critical of the failure of organizers to acknowledge the damage done to native forests in the course of supplying such mills with timber. Instead, he said, the conference pretended that the only environmental problems associated with pulp mills were to do with effluent disposal. The society called again for greater efforts to supply timber needed for pulp from plantations, rather than native forests.

A \$15 million programme of research aimed at cleaning up Australian paper production was launched during the conference. According to a report in the *Australian*, attention will be given to eliminating organochlorines and dioxins from pulp-mill effluent—especially from mills processing eucalypt timber. The next day, a Tasmanian delegate at the conference quoted recent overseas research which concluded that organochlorines and dioxins are not the only compounds responsible for the toxicity of mill effluent—and that, in many cases, scientists do not know which other chemicals are to blame.

Melton Mallee Threatened

A recent newsletter of the Victorian National Parks Association pointed out that residential development on three areas of land near Melton, as proposed to the Shire of Bacchus Marsh, poses a threat to the adjacent Long Forest Mallee Conservation Area. The construction of up to 480 houses would introduce domestic animals, weeds and rubbish to the area and might affect streams through changes to drainage and increased storm-water run-off. The Long Forest is the only example of mallee vegetation south of the Great Dividing Range and is listed on the Register of the National Estate.

Clearing House

As this issue of *Wild* went to press, State Parliament was considering amendments to

planning regulations, initiated by the government and supported by an independent panel, which would protect remaining native vegetation in Victoria. The Opposition had recently announced that it planned to reject these amendments in the Upper House, thus incurring the wrath of conservationists. The Wilderness Society accused the Opposition of placing 'political point-scoring' ahead of its 'responsibility...to the greater community'.

Snow Comment

Mt Buller's long-suffering snow gums found many allies among the resort's business community during January. Unfortunately, between 40 and 50 of the trees had already fallen to the bulldozers of the Alpine Resorts Commission by the time the matter came to wider notice through a report in the *Age*. According to the report, members of the local Chamber of Commerce felt that the ARC's plan to provide more parking space for buses would put skiers and pedestrians at risk from increased vehicular traffic. Commission chief executive Phillip Bentley argued that the aim of the exercise was to achieve just the opposite. The trees were not available for comment.

TASMANIA

Can the Leopard Change its Spots?

An initial archaeological survey of land which forms part of the Hydro-Electric Commission's King River project found several significant collections of Aboriginal artefacts. In February the HEC announced that archaeologists from the Centre for Prehistory at the University of Western Australia would conduct a second survey. The HEC consulted the Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council, before calling for tenders for the survey.

The presence of important archaeological sites in the area that would have been flooded by the Franklin-below-Gordon dam was an important factor in swaying public opinion against that project during the 1970s. So does 'the Hydro' genuinely repeat the excesses of its past? For all the new faces in its hierarchy and the new attitudes represented by archaeological surveys and the like, the HEC faces a stiff task to regain favour with the many people who once regarded it as the embodiment of environmental philistinism. (See page 31 of *Wild* no 40.)

In the absence of new engineering projects in Tasmania, the HEC hopes to tap into a lucrative market abroad. The Enterprise Commission is a branch of the HEC which General Manager Graeme Longbottom hopes may eventually earn as much as \$US20 million a year by marketing its expertise in the provision of hydro-electric power. The figure is based on a projected share of more than \$US300 million which the World Bank lends each year to fund 'energy-related consultancy services' in Third World countries.

Some people may find this prospect slightly alarming. It would be unfortunate if Tasmanian jobs were to be saved by simply exporting Western environmental problems to the developing world. Among the services which the HECEC hopes to provide is 'technical advice

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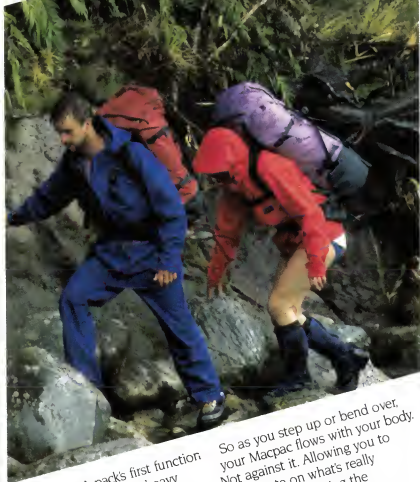
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on environmental issues related to hydro schemes'. We hope this indicates that such fears are unfounded.

Track Study

The Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage is conducting a study of the levels of use and environmental damage on all the major tracks and routes in the State's World Heritage Area. Whilst firm decisions are still some way off, walkers can expect changes—perhaps before next summer. It appears likely that walkers will be required to register for some of the more popular walks, and that numbers will be restricted. The Western Arthur Range, South-west Cape and the Walls of Jerusalem are likely candidates for such measures. Additions to the existing 'Fuel Stove Only' areas are also likely. Many bush-walkers may disagree with such policies, but something has to be done: the Tasmanian wilderness is being loved to death.

John Chapman

OVERSEAS

Papua New Guinea Forests

Deputy Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Ted Diro, stood down from office during April after it was alleged, among other things, that he had had corrupt dealings with the PNG timber industry. His situation was reported in Australian daily newspapers when it interfered with the PNG Government's efforts to control the situation on the island of Bougainville, and it received mention during March in an article in *Wilderness News*, the newsletter of the Wilderness Society. The *Wilderness News* article quoted from the findings of a Commission of Inquiry which was set up in 1987 to investigate matters related to forestry in PNG. Briefly, it appears that the timber industry in PNG is dominated by foreign companies with, it is claimed, scant respect for the social or the physical environment. These companies, it is claimed, extract large profits but contribute little or nothing of value to the people of PNG. A summary of the commission's huge report, prepared by the Asia Pacific Action Group, may be obtained by writing to PO Box 693, Sandy Bay, Tas 7005.

Mountain Agenda

Problems afflicting mountain environments around the world will be on the agenda of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 5 June 1992. Organizers are seeking to involve the mountaineering community, environmentalists and others in the preparation of major documents which will set out the present condition of the world's mountains and recommend action for their future conservation. The project was initiated by the International Mountain Society, the United Nations University and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development. Further details can be obtained from 'Mountain Agenda', c/- Institute of Geography, University of Berne, Hallerstrasse 12, CH-3012 Berne, Switzerland. ■

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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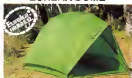
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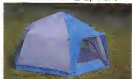
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DRYING FOOD FOR BUSHWALKING

How to eat well, save money and carry a light pack,
by Jane Thompson

I shall never forget the first reconstituted beetroot slice I ate. It was chewy, with a lovely fresh taste, and I had the added satisfaction of having grown, dried and carried it into the wilds myself. I am a mother whose family find rugged mountains, horizontal scrub, bogs and bad weather good fun. While trailing behind them I recognized the need for top quality, nutritious, light and compact foods. They must be appetizing and quick and easy to prepare when tired, cold and hungry. Satisfying these requirements necessitated the construction of charts, meal plans and diagrams which now provide us with a quick reference when planning a wilderness holiday.

Many foods are more than 80% water. If this can be removed while retaining the nutritional value, there will be a significant reduction in weight and volume—which makes good sense for bushwalking. For example, four kilograms of bananas or steak reduces to one kilogram and a 780 gram can of kidney beans dries to 185 grams. Another advantage is the increased storage life of the food. Properly dried foods will keep well for at least three months. Because of economic circumstances and the unavailability of many commercially dehydrated products, the drying of our own natural foods was at one time paramount for my family.

The basic method of drying food is to heat it while passing air over it to remove moisture. The ideal temperature is about 45°C. In many places in Australia this can be achieved by making a simple solar drier. [Note that dietitians and food technologists urge caution when drying food at home, especially by the solar method. In some parts of Australia it may be difficult or impossible to ensure that temperatures are maintained at a sufficiently high level to prevent the growth of dangerous bacteria and other organisms. Editor] All you need is a sheet of glass placed on some blocks to keep it about ten centimetres above the food. The breeze will carry away the moisture. We live on a farm in south-east Queensland and have had few problems with this method. If the temperature drops too low, you may have trouble with insects. If it rains we transfer the food to the oven warmer which is kept ajar. These problems can be avoided altogether by investing in an electrical dehydrator which has a fan and a heater. A good combination is to use the sun during the day and the drier to finish off at night. Most foods can be dried in one day using this method, but the time taken depends on the climate where you live and how the food is prepared. In any event, slice food thinly for rapid drying.



When the stick is tender, throw the underpants away and eat the stick. David Noble

Success is best achieved by starting simply and then becoming more adventurous. Most fruit and many vegetables are quite easy to dry. Try cutting them into rings, wedges, or cubes; grating them, or even drying them whole—this works for food like bananas. Lemon and orange slices with their fresh, clean taste are quick and rewarding, but the best fruit to dry are bananas, mangoes, apples and sweet pineapple. It is important that the food should be in peak condition. An exception is overripe bananas, which can often be obtained at bargain prices. These can be puréed and mixed with other fruit such as passion fruit to make a fruit leather. This tends to stick, so for drying place it on rice paper, which can be eaten as well. Cut the leather into strips with scissors.

The basic slice is about five millimetres thick. Foods with a high water content, such as tomatoes or capsicums, should be sliced more thickly. Halved 'tiny-tom' tomatoes are excellent. Place the prepared food on glass, a china plate or the shelves provided with a commercial drier. If solar drying, bring the food in as soon as the sun leaves the drier. You must ensure that the food is well dried and cooled before packaging. As a rough guide:

well-dried vegetables and meat have a clunk when dropped; fruit is leathery; herbs and leafy vegetables are brittle.

Dried vegetables are good for meals, soups and track snacks, and provide colour, interest and many of the nutritious goodies our bodies require. The root vegetables are among our favourites, as well as silver beet, broccoli, celery, egg-plant and tomatoes. Ginger, capers, olives and home-grown herbs are great for an unexpected flavour. Dry the herbs in sprigs rather than chop them. Some of these make excellent lightweight teas. To keep leafy vegetables green, cover them with a tea-towel in the solar drier.

Lean beef, sliced thinly across the grain, is the best and safest meat to dry. This is known as beef jerky. It is essential to remove all excess fat; for additional safety, meat and fish should be dipped in brine before drying. Note that some countries, including New Zealand, prohibit the importation of animal products. Meat, vegetables and nuts provide good chewing, an attribute often lacking in camping foods.

Marinades solve the problem of carrying heavy sauces to add sorely-needed interest to food carried on long trips. Mix the food in the marinade and then place in the drier. Scrape up all the powder after drying and add it to the food when packaging. A very nice Chinese

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marinade for meat or legume dishes consists of hoisin sauce, tomato purée, honey and garlic. If you like hot foods, try onion rings soaked in vinegar and chilli.

All types of beans, seeds and chick-peas can be pressure-cooked at home and then dried. An excellent bean dip can be made by overcooking and blending the beans, adding whatever flavours switch you on, then drying. Cooked pumpkin and rice are good additives which give bulk. The hard, crusty lumps can then be blended again into a powder which when reconstituted goes well with corn chips for a high-protein lunch.

We start drying about a month before a long trip. Each day's food is packaged separately. This ensures that only the necessary food is carried and prevents the onset of starvation during the last few days. It also makes pack organization easier. When packaging dried foods in plastic bags, remove the air by sucking on a straw while holding the neck of the bag firmly around the straw. Seal with a rubber band. Make the last two turns of the rubber band over the top of the bag, folded back. Then simply pull up the top to open. Don't use wire ties, as they often pierce other bags. If you are packaging fruit and nuts for a track snack, keep them separate or the nuts will go soggy.



Food drying in progress, and samples of the finished article (bottom right). Jane Thompson

I have included recipes used by my husband and 19-year-old son during an 18-day walk—in fact, the second leg of a 29-day walk—in South-west Tasmania. Almost all the ingredients listed can be dried at home as described. For convenience when it comes to

cooking in the bush, carry the ingredients of each meal in three separate packages: meat or beans and vegetables together; grains or pasta; and spices. The quantities given will feed two. And don't worry—I had great trouble on our first few trips. The diet is biased towards hot and savoury foods—none of us is perfect! I tried to keep the lighter meals for the last days of the trip, and got the heavier ones out of the way quickly.

If you want to have functioning knees at the end of a long trip, some attempt to reduce fuel consumption—and hence weight—is a must. This can be done in various ways. As indicated above, food can be precooked before drying. Soaking dried foods will reduce cooking time in most cases. Raw legumes can be soaked overnight, heated in the morning, insulated in a woollen garment, then reheated in the evening. If you run out of fuel, most grains are quite edible if simply soaked overnight. An excellent method of conserving fuel with a Trangia—or any two billies of which one will sit securely on top of the other—is to part-cook foods such as meat or beans, and vegetables, in the larger pot and then place this, covered, on top of the smaller pot containing grains or pasta, which are cooked by the absorption method on very low heat. Get to know how much fuel you need for a particular task. For example, using a Trangia, most evening meals for two people require about 65 millilitres of methylated spirits to cook.

A few tips will help you to get the most out of what you carry. (See Wild Ideas, Wild no 36, for more.) Remember to chew all your food very well, especially the carbohydrates, to ensure complete digestion. Cooking destroys many nutrients, so keep it to a minimum. Combine vegetable proteins to get a complete protein. Fats are the richest energy source, by weight, of all foods, so don't forget the oil. The body uses it very efficiently during steady exercise such as bushwalking.

I hope this will inspire you to supplement a shop-bought, freeze-dried diet with your own innovations. Enjoy dining out on the best wholesome tucker for miles around, and feel the satisfaction within you. ■

Jane Thompson (see Contributors in Wild no 11) has been caving, canoeing, rockclimbing and bushwalking in Queensland, Tasmania and New Zealand for 30 years. Her knowledge of food preserving grew from the need to feed her active, growing children.

Dishes with Dried Food

Beans ka Patria

150 grams soy and haricot beans; onion, garlic and ginger; dried tomatoes; dried carrots; 2 tablespoons dried tomato purée; 1 tablespoon dried coconut; 6 cardamom pods; 2 teaspoons cumin; 1 teaspoon coriander; 1 teaspoon fenugreek; 1 teaspoon kelp; 1 teaspoon turmeric; salt and pepper to taste; 2 teaspoons garam masala before serving. Serve with 200 grams bulgar wheat.

Bolognese Sauce

150 grams soya mince and split mung beans, or red lentils and peas; onion, garlic and ginger; dried capsicum and mixed vegetables; 1 tablespoon dried tomato purée; 1 teaspoon sugar; ½ teaspoon kelp; olives, basil, parsley, oregano and rosemary. Serve with 200 grams pasta.

Chinese Meat and Vegetables

150 grams dried lean meat in thin slices or lima and broad beans, marinated in hoisin, tomato, honey and soy sauce; garlic; dried onions and eggplant; 1 tablespoon instant potato; 1 chicken stock cube; 3 cloves; 2 cardamom pods; 1 cinnamon stick; 2 teaspoons cumin; 2 teaspoons turmeric; 1 teaspoon coriander; 1 teaspoon fenugreek and mustard; 1 bay leaf, coriander leaves; chilli, salt and pepper to taste. Serve with 250 grams yellow rice.

Gosht Madras

150 grams soya chunks and red lentils; onion, garlic and ginger; 2 dried lemon slices; 1 tablespoon dried tomato purée; 1 stock cube; 2 teaspoons coriander; 2 teaspoons black pepper; 1 teaspoon cumin; 1 teaspoon turmeric; salt to taste; 2 teaspoons garam masala before serving. Serve with 250 grams yellow rice and buckwheat.

Hot Beef Curry

150 grams dried beef and soya chunks; onion, garlic and ginger; dried carrots; 2 dried lemon slices; 1 tablespoon dried tomato purée; 1 teaspoon coriander; 1 teaspoon cumin; 1 teaspoon fenugreek; 1 teaspoon kelp; 1 teaspoon pepper; 1 tablespoon turmeric; chilli and salt to taste. Serve with 250 grams rice.

Kootu

100 grams red lentils; onion, garlic and ginger; dried broccoli, carrots, chillies, peas and

pumpkin; 2 tablespoons dried coconut; 1 teaspoon kelp; 1 teaspoon mustard seed; 1 teaspoon pepper; 1 teaspoon sugar; 1 teaspoon turmeric; 1 bay leaf; curry leaves. Serve with 250 grams cracked barley and bulgar.

Masoor Dahl

150 grams split peas; 10 almonds; onion, garlic and ginger; 2 tablespoons dried tomatoes; 4 cardamom pods; 4 cloves; 2 teaspoons coriander; 2 teaspoons cumin; 1 teaspoon cinnamon; 1 teaspoon kelp; 1 teaspoon turmeric; dried coconut; salt and pepper to taste. Serve with 250 grams rice.

Mexican Beans

150 grams precooked and dried kidney beans; onion, garlic and ginger; ½ tablespoon raisins; dried capsicum; dried tomato purée; 1 stock cube; 1 teaspoon kelp; 1 bay leaf, basil, chilli, olives to taste. Serve with 200 grams pasta.

Murgh Dhansar

150 grams lentils; onion, garlic and ginger; 2 tablespoons dried spinach; 1 tablespoon dried eggplant; 1 tablespoon instant potato; 1 chicken stock cube; 3 cloves; 2 cardamom pods; 1 cinnamon stick; 2 teaspoons cumin; 2 teaspoons turmeric; 1 teaspoon coriander; 1 teaspoon fenugreek and mustard; 1 bay leaf, coriander leaves; chilli, salt and pepper to taste. Serve with 250 grams yellow rice.

Persian Mock Chicken

150 grams chick-peas and soya beans; onion, garlic and ginger; 2 dried lemon slices; 2 tablespoons dried tomato purée; 1 chicken stock cube; 1 teaspoon brown sugar; 1 teaspoon cinnamon; 1 teaspoon clove powder; 1 teaspoon kelp; dried coconut; salt and pepper to taste. Serve with 200 grams pasta.

150 grams soya chunks and dried meat; onion, garlic and ginger; dried capsicum; 3 tablespoons coriander; 1 tablespoon tamarind; 2 teaspoons cumin; 2 teaspoons mustard; 1 teaspoon kelp; 1 teaspoon pepper; 1 teaspoon turmeric; chilli and salt to taste. Serve with 250 grams rice.

Note: All recipes serve two people.



THE VIKING

Andrew Brookes muses on the moods of one of Victoria's most isolated peaks

When I was seven years old I stood on the summit of Mt Howitt and thought I was at the edge of the world. In front of me the Devils Staircase tumbled into the haze of the Terrible Hollow. Beyond was a place of pioneers and murder—the Wonnangatta valley; I could almost see the pack-horses as my father had described them, carrying the victim (cut into conveniently sized bits) out along the track we had climbed that morning. Across the valley the blue silhouette of the Viking epitomized the rugged unknown. The names of the peaks in between captured the spirit of earlier bushwalkers and explorers: the Crosscut Saw, Mt Buggery, Mt Speculation, Mt Despair, the Razor—names from a time when bushwalkers explored blank spots on maps.

As the song says, I wish I didn't know now what I didn't know then. The myth of endlessness, of fading blue ridges continuing forever, has always been a popular image of the bush. It was a misconception even then, when I was seven. The pioneering momentum had pushed roads and logging operations all through the Victorian high country, although walkers could still complete trips of several days' duration in largely unaltered terrain.

Today there are no blank spots on the maps. Any thoughts of infinity as you gaze from the summit of Mt Howitt are short-lived. On the steep upper slopes of the surrounding valleys and ridges, particularly the King River face of the Crosscut Saw, the criss-cross scars of snig tracks mark out areas where alpine ash forests once stood. The erosion, patchy regeneration and streams without buffers make a depressing sight. The logging has just about finished because almost all the mature forests are gone. 'Once-only logging', they call it. Whether we will have 'just-one-more-time logging' a hundred years from now remains an open question.



The view from 'the edge of the world'. The horns of the Viking, seen from near Mt Howitt. *Chris Baxter.* Left, the Viking in radiant mood, cliffs aglow in the light of sunset. *Andrew Brookes*

The maps may be complete, the endless bush may be no more, but there are still unblemished pockets of country. Today, bushwalking is for me a search for unaltered forests, for undisturbed valleys, for untracked spurs. The wild places are easier to get to, but harder to find. With careful planning, though, the Alps as they once were can be rediscovered.

The Viking is the most obvious of the places that survive unscathed. It is one of the more isolated peaks in the Alps—although today that only means that the nearest vehicle tracks are a short day's walk away. Nevertheless, it is one of the few places left in the region where all that is needed to ensure a trip through undisturbed bush is the simple decision to go there.

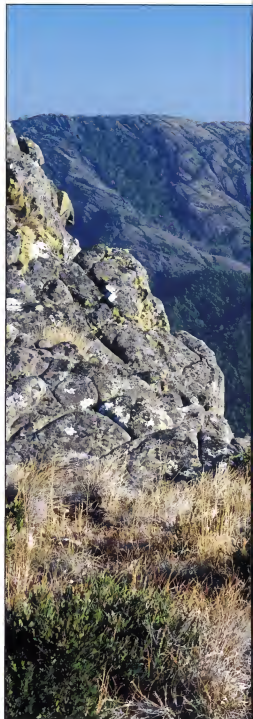
The last time I visited the Viking, we approached along the Alpine Track from Mt Despair. In foggy weather, unless you have been following the map diligently, it can be difficult to decide at what point to begin the descent to Viking Saddle. The problem can be solved by letting loose a despairing howl in the general direction of the unseen cliffs. The

answering echo will indicate which way you should head.

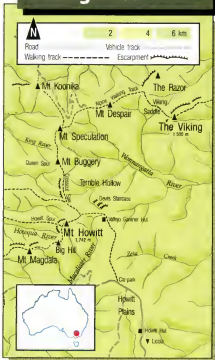
On this occasion the weather was clear and my companions' map-reading boringly competent, so the echo technique remained untested. When we arrived at the saddle—our intended campsite—I gently broke the news that I planned to go on alone and camp on the summit. I was so touched by the considerate way in which my mates concealed their disappointment that I almost changed my mind, but the arrival of a large party from the other direction decided the matter. Crowded isolation is not for me.

I nipped down the gully to collect water before continuing, and arrived back, soaked in sweat, an hour later: the water had been a long way down. I shouldered my pack and headed up the slope towards the cliffs.

As with most clifflines encountered in the Victorian Alps, the steepest sections of the Viking can be avoided. On the summit I cooked my meal and watched the moonrise. In the morning I had the view to myself. The valleys were filled with light mist, concealing any distant signs of roads or settlement. The early morning light emphasized the textures of



Viking Area



Bushwalkers enjoy 'thoughts of infinity' on the summit of the Viking. Right, the view from the Viking of its elusive neighbour, the Razor, and the blue ridges beyond. *Brookes*

the rock and brought a temporary richness to the colours of the vegetation.

I rejoined my companions and we headed down to the Wonnangatta valley. The Viking has never been logged, and we passed through some mature stands of alpine ash. Once before when camping in the Wonnangatta valley, during a drought which had reduced the river to a series of shrinking pools swirling with dying trout, I had been woken at three in the morning by dingoes howling nearby. Mostly, though, the valley sticks in my mind as a place of grazing, trail bikes and four-wheel drives. Things were no different this time. Mind you, a few iron sheds at the homestead site do add a historical significance about equivalent to that of my backyard wood-shed. Captain Mark Phillips once launched a new model of Range Rover here—a lost opportunity to put royalty on the cover of *Wild*.

To get full value from a trip to the Viking, I prefer to leave the cleared parts

of the Wonnangatta valley to the petrol-heads and over-grazers, and find alternative routes. By avoiding those areas which have access tracks, choosing the less obvious spurs or following sections of undisturbed river, it is still possible to find solitude and to establish links with the landscape as it once was. Ironically, whereas blanks on the map attracted an earlier generation of walkers, it is the detail on modern maps which now permits this style of walking.

When the aim of a walk is to explore new corners of the forest or to try out a different route, a low-key sense of adventure is sustained in a way which could never be achieved by join-the-dots bushwalking. Hackneyed expectations of rugged peaks to conquer or raging



ivers to cross are unlikely to be satisfied by this terrain which is humbled so easily by the bulldozer. The truth is that on a world scale these mountains are only gentle foothills—but that is their attraction. The steepest spurs, such as Mt Koonika's King Spur, can be negotiated with a bit of cunning route-finding or a little pack-hauling. Competent walkers can explore any of the streams. It is possible to camp on the very summits. The bush has a beauty more subtle than spectacular.

In winter, isolation reclaims the whole Howitt region. For a few months each year, a visit to Mt Howitt requires several days. The roads are still there, of course; but their impact is insignificant when closed by snow.

The first time I visited Mt Howitt in winter, we completed a traverse on skis of the high country between the Bluff and Mt Reynard. A massive cornice projected over the Terrible Hollow. The trees were encrusted with ice; in the distance the Viking, although lower than the surrounding peaks, was trimmed with snow.

In 1987 Gary Carpenter and I visited the area in early spring. We made the most of the limited ski runs on Mt Speculation, but the real pleasures were the setting of our campsite near the summit, and touring amongst the ancient snow gums.

Our main aim was to traverse the Crosscut Saw to Mt Howitt. The snow was frozen hard, and the ridge was nar-

row in places and treed in others, so we did not regret our decision to leave skis behind in favour of crampons.

At one point along the ridge the Great Divide was an icy knife-edge. We could stand with one foot at the head of a frozen gully which fell steeply to the King River to the north of the range, and the other at the top of an equally icy chute leading into the Wonnangatta to the south.

From the ridge we could see almost every Victorian snow-field; once more it seemed that the gentle blue ripples of distant peaks and valleys went on forever. ■

Andrew Brookes (see Contributors in Wild no 13) has been bushwalking and ski touring for many years. One of Wild's most regular contributors, he is a lecturer in outdoor pursuits.

THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM

Tasmanian bushwalking for everyone, by *Alex Hopkins*



Sometimes one can be lucky. I know it sounds improbable, but we enjoyed a week in the Tasmanian mountains without rain. And not in a summer of drought like the previous one, when the island State had been burnt brown by the sun and the muddy patches on the Overland Track were only ankle-deep. (Even in that very dry summer of 1987-88, I met a walker at Lake Dove who gazed towards the mist-shrouded peaks and muttered that this was his fourth visit to Cradle Mountain and he still hadn't seen it.) This year the eight days in December we chose to spend walking at the Walls of Jerusalem were blessed with sunshine, clear skies, and views that seemed to go on forever.

The first thing we noticed about the Walls of Jerusalem was the scarcity of other people. Compared with the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair region, this area was almost deserted. Last season more than 3000 walkers paid a registration fee to walk the Overland Track and were joined by an unknown number who bypassed the ranger stations. In the Reserve, one constantly meets walkers—especially around the huts, where it seems that the 'House Full' sign goes up every night. We encountered very few others around the Walls of Jerusalem. There may be several reasons for this. Firstly, access is more difficult. The usual route seems to be a steep climb from Fish River past Trappers Hut to the Central Plateau. Secondly, there are virtually no walking tracks or signposts, though navigation around the Walls is easy in clear weather. Thirdly, there are only a few, very small huts. On the other hand, it is open country and good campsites abound.

When we first looked at the map of this area, one of our party exclaimed, 'Blimey,

what do we do for water?' For the most part, in fact, the Central Plateau is dotted with lakes and tarns. Walkers are never out of sight of water in any direction.

The Walls of Jerusalem are in the north-west corner of the Central Plateau Conservation Area, which abuts the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, and in good weather the well-known peaks of that park—Cradle

Mountain, Barn Bluff, Pelion West, Ossa and the rest—are clearly visible to the west. That fretted skyline adds something special to sunsets.

Another feature of the Walls of Jerusalem is compactness. The five peaks that dominate this area are all close together, joined by the so-called gates—Herods Gate, Ephraims Gate, Zion Gate, Jaffa Gate, Damascus Gate and Gate of the



Pencil pines (*Athrotaxis cupressoides*) below the West Wall, Walls of Jerusalem. **Ward Totham.** **Left,** Dixons Kingdom Hut, on the edge of an ancient pencil pine forest in Jaffa Vale. **Opposite,** walkers on the rocky summit of Mt Jerusalem. **Alex Hopkins**



Chain. This is an area of rare beauty. The peaks and the great buttresses of the West Wall, the Wailing Wall, and Clumner Bluff (with its serrated 'clumns') are mirrored in the still waters of Lake Salome, the Pools of Siloam and Bethesda, and a cluster of smaller pools called Solomons Jewels. Such names alone are enough to give one itchy feet. The largest stretch of water in this area, popular with trout fishermen, is the prosaically named Lake Ball. The multitudinous tiny tarns are unnamed.

In general the plateau is just over 1000 metres above sea level; its highest peaks are Mt Jerusalem (1459 metres) and the

Temple (1446 metres). Although the fortress-like cliffs of the West Wall seem to present an impenetrable barrier, it is in fact possible to scramble to the top. It is relatively easy to walk to the top of all other peaks in the area.

In the alleys, kangaroos keep the grass neatly clipped, giving the alpine meadows a park-like look. This is particularly so around Dixons Kingdom Hut in the Vale of Jaffa. This hut, built on the edge of a pencil-pine forest, is one of the most picturesque cattlemen's huts you're ever likely to see. Siseaman and Chapman (*Cradle Mountain National Park*, Algona Publications, 1984, page 90) say of this forest that 'This is probably the largest stand of pure pencil pine left in Tasmania; some of the old gnarled trees reaching 20 m in height and estimated to be more than 1000 years old'. Sad to say, one can walk through this magnificent forest in about 15 minutes.

The pencil pine is very prone to fire and almost the entire Central Plateau is a pencil pine cemetery, the landscape covered with the bleached skeletons of trees long dead. It seems that huge fires earlier this century wiped out the pines in this

area. Once dead, the trunks and branches are bleached by the harsh weather to a shining silver-grey, their etched grain standing out in swirling patterns. We saw no signs of pencil pines regenerating.

Worth a look while in the area is the small hut on the side of the Temple. This

hut is made of stone, and the builder—clearly someone who liked solitude—managed to carry in iron for the roof and glass for two small windows. It has magnificent views down the valley, but is well above the tree line and far from firewood. In an emergency, two persons might shelter here.



Looking over Lake Salome to the imposing cliffs of the West Wall, Hopkins

Walls of Jerusalem Area



Finally, as if to pile good luck on an already lucky trip, we found the spectacular wild flowers around the Walls. At lower levels, the showy crimson waratahs (*Teleopea truncata*) were in bloom. Above the tree line, yellow-eye daisies, buttercups and golden guinea-flowers covered the ground. Most spectacular of all was *Richea scoparia*—a smaller relation of the pandanus—which, because of its habit of growing in close communities, presents massed walls of colourful flowers. This tendency to form impenetrable thickets makes it a formidable obstacle for walkers. Siseman and Chapman (1984, page 14) note that '*Richea scoparia* is a large bush up to 2 m high with attractive spikes of white, cream or red flowers. Its spiked leaves create a nightmare for the bushwalker'.

The flowering scopia's show was enhanced by many other native plants, and great moss cushions (made famous by Peter Dombrovskis's Mt Anne photos) were everywhere. One of my companions surmised that if this area had good weather, it might be one of Tasmania's premier tourist attractions. Another dourly replied that if this area had good weather, it wouldn't look as it does. That's true. The rain, the wind, the snow, the harshness so well portrayed in the film *The Tale of Ruby Rose*, create the beauty that nature so grudgingly reveals.

How lucky were we? To be where the scratchy scoparia blooms when Murphy (and his law) were on holidays and Lady Bountiful was in charge—that's lucky. ■

Alex Hopkins has been an active bushwalker and skier since 1954, and recently walked in Nepal and England. His other interests include green-water canoeing and bicycle touring.

CARRUTHERS PEAK

March 1989

Blazing white spears of quartz,
sharp beneath my boots,
and sedimentary rock
in tilted layers.
Slate and shale
with stiff white alpine sunrises
flowering among the stony flakes.
Shadows contained
in the rugged, towering Craggs
so that every rock is clear,
the depths profoundly luminous.

Do you remember
hanging over Watsons Craggs on skis,
gullies snow-deep,
iced rocks glittering?
Remember trying out a thrilling,
narrow funnel,
skis sliding down unknown snow
till there seemed only air;
then climbing out,
above those Craggs,
to go flying down
the great, white wall
that is the winter northern face
of Twynam's Western Spur?

Marvellous, mysterious
was that 'hollow in the hills' below,
and the snow we skied
melted into one source stream
of the enormous Murray River:
the joy that our skis wrote
would flow,
in water, to the sea.

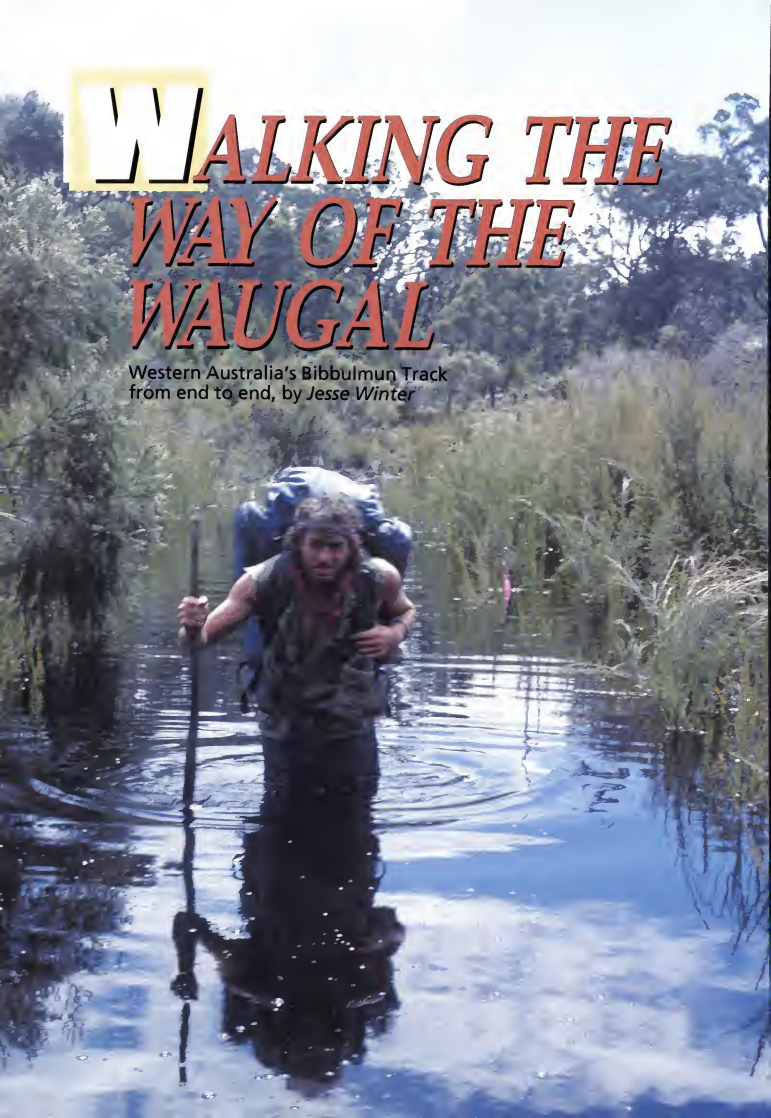
It's summer now,
and paper daisies flower
where once was snow.

Elyne Mitchell

The Sentinel, Twynam West Spur and
Watsons Craggs, Snowy Mountains, New
South Wales. David Noble

WALKING THE WAY OF THE WAUGAL

Western Australia's Bibbulmun Track
from end to end, by Jesse Winter



The people would find all the places they associated with the Borongora (the spirit); all the places they could have increased, where they could feed. That's where the Waugal came through, where he'd been. That's what they call the Bibbulmun Track.

Ken Colbung, Aboriginal elder.

On a sunny Monday morning in September, I set out to walk what is known as Western Australia's first long-distance walking track. With me was an American friend, George Grossman, whom I'd met in 1987 while walking what many consider to be the world's premier long-distance track, the Appalachian Trail. George had completed that 3450 kilometre walk in five months; I had covered half its length and returned a year later to do the remainder.

The Appalachian experience had warned me not to underestimate this 650 kilometre walk. Accordingly I took care, before setting out, to make appropriate mental and emotional preparations in addition to gathering gear and planning resupply points.

The northern terminus of the Bibbulmun Track is on the outskirts of Perth, in the hills suburb of Kalamunda. On that first day we walked quickly away from civilization into the jarrah forest of the metropolitan water-catchment areas in the Darling Ranges.

Here camping is only allowed on designated sites, spaced 'roughly a day's walk apart'. At times we resented this constraint, but we were aware that the track had been relocated into the catchment areas with that restriction.

The positive result of this relocation was that for 160 kilometres we made only one contact with civilization—a planned (and much appreciated) food-drop at the Albany Highway crossing. Apart from this encounter we experienced conditions as close to 'wilderness walking' as a track of this kind can offer.

Yet the Bibbulmun Track is not a true wilderness walk, a fact which some people might resent. For the majority of its length the walker travels old forestry roads or railway grades. Some roads are well tended and obviously still in use; others are so old and overgrown that they're downright difficult to follow. Commonly they're somewhere in between—old enough to appear more like two parallel foot tracks than a road, but clear enough to provide comfortable walking. I was grateful to be able to cover such a distance through our Australian forests with purpose and direction.

Our first week spun by, a kaleidoscope of sights and experiences: wide-open wandoo forests, rich in grace and anti-

quity; George's first kangaroos, emus and black cockatoos; the ache of unaccustomed muscles, chafed hips and toes; Abyssinia and Sullivan Rocks, two gigantic granite domes patterned with lichen and tiny, swaying everlasting; bright, sunny days and even a touch of sunburn; the steady, sturdy jarrah forest, so constant yet always fascinating—and

point, and the small general store in nearby Dwellingup proved quite adequate for our simple needs.

From Nanga we followed the Murray River upstream, walking in a fine, light drizzle. The rain intensified during the day and we walked steadily, silently, gazing down the narrow tunnel of our hooded vision.



The West in bloom. George Grossman walks through jarrah forest ablaze with prickly Moses wattle. **Opposite**, water became a problem, but not in the manner expected. Grossman wades a section of the Bibbulmun Track. Jesse Winter

the flowers, always the flowers. The bright crimson coral creeper and masses of vivid yellow prickly Moses wattle vied for our attention with the purples of the various heaves and hardenbergies.

The Bibbulmun Track is marked with yellow metal triangles painted with coloured, stylized symbols of the Waugal—the creative spirit-serpent of the Bibbulmun people, a powerful mythological character. These markers are placed on trees and posts at 'regular intervals'. They serve also to indicate changes of direction, the head of the Waugal pointing the way. In general we found that the track was adequately marked. On those occasions when the Waugals seemed inordinately far apart, we relied on a sixth sense, an intuitive feeling, to reassure us and keep us on the correct path. The guidebook sufficed for our needs though we would have liked more detail on the maps and more information about the country through which we walked.

On the completion of our first week's walking we rewarded ourselves with a day off, camping with friends at Nanga Mill, an old logging town destroyed by fire in 1961. We'd walked almost 160 kilometres. This was our second resupply

The Stirling Dam was overflowing, forcing us to use a side-track downstream in order to reach a tricky rock crossing. The steep hills beyond it were treacherous with mud and slippery clay; and the track, overgrown in places with saplings and bushes, became a water-laden wall through which we had to force a path.

We hitched a ride into Collie, where I made contact with Drew Griffiths, an officer of the Department of Conservation & Land Management (CALM), who'd played a major role in the 1988 relocation and renovation of the track. He and his wife provided fine hospitality and Drew answered many of our questions.

A day south of Collie we camped at Honeymoon Pool, a popular car-camping site a short distance downstream from the Wellington Dam. It was a Saturday night and I should have known better. Just before dark a crowd of Harley Davidsons roared into the campsite beside us and 20 black-jacketed and tatoed riders set up a generator, floodlights, a small marquee, fridges full of beer, a video and a powerful sound system belting out heavy metal—then proceeded to party the night away.

In the 60 kilometres between Wellington Dam and the tiny town of Kirup the track wound in and out of farming country. Steep, rolling hills folded into tree-lined valleys; contented Friesians

munched shin-high clover, and orchards glowed with the pink and white of plum, peach and pear blossom. The rain which had dogged us for much of the week cleared, and we were blessed with crisp, sunny spring weather.

The closer contact with civilization had its negative aspects; the track seemed particularly poorly marked, and upon investigation we found that many Waugals had been used as targets and were lying mangled in the undergrowth.

The final 25 kilometres into Kirup are on sealed roads, albeit minor ones. It made for fast, easy walking—and sore feet. The owners of the tiny Kirup store allowed us to sleep in a tumbledown shed behind the shop, and the tavern next door offered cold beer and hot showers. Here we were joined by Rodger, a friend who was to be with us for a week as we made our way south to Pemberton.

For ten kilometres the track is wedged between the Blackwood River and an apparently vast pine plantation. Logging was under way and we paused to watch the mantis-like machinery at work. 'Why on earth is CALM involved with commercial pine plantations?', I wondered. 'To take the pressure off native forests', Rodger suggested.

Perhaps he was right. I could see the reasoning. But it seems to me that ultimately the only way to protect our dwindling native forests is to slash our demand for paper products. I surveyed the sterile monoculture around me and saw in it the bulky Sunday newspapers we are wont to read.

Beyond the river the rain tumbled down again and we trudged up out of the valley to a high ridge with marvellous views over steeply pitched farming country. Our night's camp was beside an old mill pond. It had a fringe of reeds beneath an encircling wall of pale, graceful bullich (*Eucalyptus megacarpa*) and housed a hearty choir of frogs for our entertainment.

Though jarrah had been the predominant vegetation type thus far, we'd also encountered appreciable marri, blackbutt, bullich, paperbark, banksia, she-oak and wandoo. Now we could add karri. Variety had become the key theme of the walk.

In this new, lofty environment birds were noticeably more prolific. Our steady friends the black cockatoos (both red- and white-tailed), magpies, Port Lincoln (ring-neck) parrots, kookaburras and crows knew no boundaries. It was among the small birds that we noticed the surge of activity. High in the canopy, they sang, chased and played, remaining largely anonymous but providing us with a constant chorus.

We saw fewer kangaroos and wallabies now—not, we guessed, because there were fewer of them, but because the thick, three metre understorey hid them so effectively. Emus still made unexpected and fleeting appearances. One fatherly



The author at his work, at a quiet campsite in the jarrah forest on day two. **Right**, the Waugal shows the way. Track markers and guidebook, Bibbulmun Track. George Grossman.

male erupted from the scrub into our path, grunting and stomping, while dull grey, tiger-striped chicks scattered in panic.

Rain continued to fall, mostly in showers—some cold and fleeting, some warm and misty and clinging—occasionally in heavy, drenching storms. At other times we'd walk most of the day in fine weather until a racing cloud doused us yet again before tearing off inland. It was rapidly becoming a very wet spring, particularly for walking.

Along the Donnelly River, clear-felling scarred our way for the first time. The scene looked like a battlefield, with tattered trees still standing here and there, and stumps, piles of logs and bark strewn around like corpses. We felt violated, as if our home had been desecrated.

On the last Saturday in September we met my family. They whisked us into Manjimup to resupply and to spend the afternoon in the pub, watching the VFL grand final on television. George was enthralled, both by the game and the surrounding culture in the hotel. That evening we were back in the bush beside a crackling fire, and I felt I'd stepped through a warp in time.

Lefroy Brook, 15 kilometres north of Pemberton, was our first flooded crossing. We waded knee-deep for 50 metres with dirty, silt-laden water swirling all around. Though we didn't know it at the

time, this was to become a familiar process.

We farewelled Rodger in Pemberton, knowing that we'd miss his simple, honest company, yet glad, too, to be 'alone' again. Staff at the CALM office informed us that rainfall had totalled 77 millimetres in the last three days. Little wonder we were wet.

Just south of Pemberton stands the Gloucester Tree, an old fire look-out and major tourist attraction. We took our place in the queue; then, in a light drizzle, climbed the slippery steps to the platform 68 metres above the ground. The view over patchworked forest and farmland was ample reward for the effort.

The lure of an overnight stop in Northcliffe carried us through a 35 kilometre day marked by more heavy rain and flooded streams. We waded four of them. Around the Warren River the white clematis creeper was everywhere—draped on the ground, coiled up saplings and branches and tumbling in great showy heaps on the ground. It looked like the wind-blown driftings of an errant snowstorm. 'Nature's bouquet', George dubbed it.

The terrain and vegetation now changed rapidly from karri forest to jarrah and then to low coastal sand plain. New flowers surrounded us; ti-tree was plentiful, as was a low, prickly acacia. The first graceful red grevilleas seemed to nod as we passed by.

Abandoning our attempt to walk the boggy, flooded track into Northcliffe, we took to the old railway line which runs



interspersed with mocking blue sky—even hail at one point. We hooted and hollered and laughed at the madness of it all, and ploughed on towards Shannon. The evening was bitter and we cowered behind a giant karri to await the arrival of my parents with our final food-drop. When at last they came we crammed into the warm car to drink coffee and eat sticky buns.

These last days seemed to encapsulate the whole experience. We walked from towering, majestic karri and coastal marri to scrubby sand plain; from open jarrah to granite outcrops; and from paper-bark swamps to banksia and marshes. We were alternately rained upon and warmed by a welcome spring sun. We marvelled at flowers, birds and animals and felt the earth close beneath our feet. We walked easily, camped early, ate well, sat up late by a fire and shared the finest of warm friendships.

I walked heavily towards our final camp, riven by misgivings about returning to the noisy, rushing, cluttered world outside. George, too, was lost in thought, walking silently, head bowed. However, we were drawn out of this private contemplation by a sense of tingling anticipation as we approached the Deep River crossing.

The guidebook showed an alternative route along the South-west Highway, to be used if the crossing was impassable, but such was our confidence now after having successfully crossed so many flooded streams and rivers that we

scoffed at any thought of using it. We were in for a shock.

The river had swollen right out of its channel and spread 30 metres back up the track. I stripped and set out to wade as far as I could. Before I'd reached the main channel I was over my head and swimming in freezing water. The current was strong, the opposite bank a long way off. I turned back. We contemplated swimming together and floating our packs behind us, but gave that up as foolhardy. George investigated a newly fallen marri which almost bridged the flood, but decided it was too dangerous. Chastened, we swallowed our pride and set out on the six kilometre detour.

parallel. Here we had our first and only encounter with a snake—a metre-long tiger, decidedly angry at being disturbed from its place in the now fitful sun.

Sleeping in the hotel felt strange after 24 nights in the bush, but we welcomed the chance to shower and do our laundry once again. George had another encounter with Australian pub culture, playing darts and drinking beer late into the night. We were regaled with a number of stories regarding the track but were unable to separate fact from fancy so simply listened, shrugged and smiled.

I had expected water to be one of our major concerns on this hike, yet found to my great surprise that we rarely needed to carry more than a litre. Of course we were walking through a wet spring; summer and autumn would present a very different picture. Throughout the walk we chose our water sources carefully, and at no time felt the need to use any kind of water-purifying agent.

We made a testing barefooted crossing of the torrid Canterbury River; as we sat to put on our boots, heavy rain poured down from a leaden sky. All morning we skirted huge puddles, bog-holes and small lakes, waded bootless across turgid streams and trudged through ankle-deep mud. Still, my boots held the moisture at bay. Alas, all this effort went to waste when we attempted to cross yet another flooded stream on a fallen tree. It broke, sending us in almost to our waists. So much for dry boots.

Day 26 brought the wildest weather of the walk: gale-force winds, cold and icy out of the south; drenching rain-squalls

Bibbulmun Track



Our final camp, on a small sandy rise some 15 kilometres from Walpole, was a quiet, almost sad, affair. A melancholy mope kept us company and the distant roar of the ocean reminded us of how far we'd come.

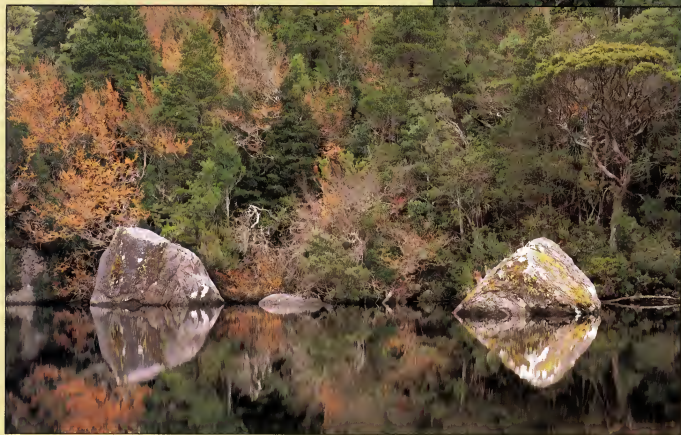
It rained hard during our last morning. This made 17 wet days out of the last 23. That first sunny spring week seemed an illusion of wishful memory. Yet our spirits had not been dampened and we looked back to see with satisfaction that we'd accepted all conditions without prejudice. It had been a marvellous walk.

Early one October afternoon, we climbed the steps of the CALM office in Walpole and set down our packs. We grinned, shook hands and hugged. It had taken us 30 days to walk the Bibbulmun Track end to end—and the Waigal had watched over us all the way. ■

Jesse Winter grew up on a farm near Cranbrook, in the south-west of Western Australia. He has been 'going bush' since he was a child, has travelled extensively, and in 1987-88 walked the 3450 kilometre length of the Appalachian Trail in the USA. At present he lives near Albany on Western Australia's south coast.

TASMANIAN WILDERNESS

It doesn't come much wilder—the unspoilt forest grandeur of our island State, by *Rob Blakers*





Deciduous beech, pandanus and pencil pine, Central Highlands, Tasmanian World Heritage Area. **Left**, headwaters of the Anthony River, West Coast Range.

The photo reproduced over is available as a poster. Use the order form in this issue and write 'Tasmania' at the bottom of the form; indicate whether you want it on plain paper or laminated, and how many.

A full-page photograph of a rainforest. In the foreground, there are large, moss-covered tree trunks and branches. A waterfall flows over rocks in the middle ground, creating a bright white spray of water. The background is filled with dense green foliage and more trees. The overall atmosphere is vibrant and natural.

Wild

Rain forest, northern Tasmania. Photo Rob Blakers



WILD CONSERVATION



PARKS, PEOPLE AND PRESSURES

John Webb looks at park practice in North America and Europe, to see what can be learned for Australia's future

During a recent round-the-world trip which took in such diverse areas as the Californian Sierras, the Canadian Rockies, the English Lake District, Wales and Scotland, the Pyrenees and the Swiss and French Alps, I was struck by the different attitude to National Parks—on the part of those who use them and those who manage them—in those countries compared with Australia. I also realized that what I saw might be an indication of possible future trends in Australia.

It was quite an experience to find myself at dawn on the summit of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, a 2884 metre peak in the French Pyrenees, and yet have to share that small space with a dozen other people, their cameras, and three languages: French, German and Spanish. (Nobody stepped back to take summit photographs; it would have meant stepping off into thin air!) This is the root of new problems for Australia, too, where the high density of park use common in Europe and North America is just beginning. There has been an explosive increase in wilderness use here in the last five years, and indications are that this will intensify further. We need some clear thinking on how to manage the pressure people exert on parks, and it is well worth looking at the strategies of other National Parks bodies; they are already coping with the levels of use we can expect in Australia in the near future.

Everywhere I went during that trip there were people, in numbers I had never before experienced. Whereas in Tasmania one might be the only person in a valley, and be disgusted to see another brightly clad dot appear over a saddle, elsewhere in the world it seems that the loneliness of the wilderness—supposedly one of its main attractions—is but a memory. Escaping from the overcrowded top of Mt Snowdon as trainloads spewed forth from the railway station there, I fled to camp near the



Their own slice of the view: on Mt Snowdon, Wales, looking down towards Llyn Llydaw and Pen-Y-Pass. John Webb. **Opposite**, walkers celebrate on Mt Geryon, Tasmania. Room to jump, but for how long? Kevin McGernan

neighbouring peak of Tryfan. The following morning I climbed the south ridge to have a quiet lunch, only to find myself one of 15 parties with the same idea—including one man and his dog. Facing outward, each of us hugging our own little slice of the view, it really felt as though 'every man and his dog' was there.

I was also disappointed to discover that in many places tracks had been so prepared and improved as to remove all

difficulty from the walk. This is not to wish masochistically for hardship; but there is a certain satisfaction in placing one's foot on the rock—the 'bones' of the land—and sensing its texture. To smooth the way is to render a walk in the mountains little different from any stroll on a suburban pavement. Following a path from Langdale to Wasdale in the Lake District which my father had walked some 30 years before, ascending Ben Nevis or walking in Yosemite, I was at first appalled to see carefully sculpted stairs; even, in Yosemite, asphalt laid in two metre wide roads. However, a glance around me at the numbers of people using such paths convinced me that,

regrettably, such measures were necessary.

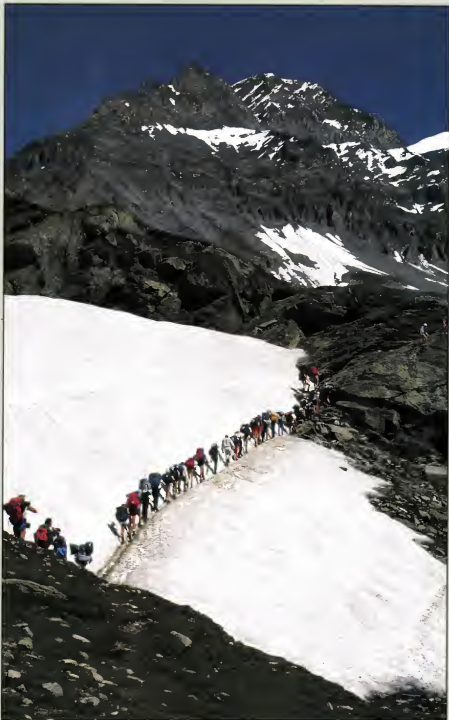
If overcrowded tracks were one thing, the variety of means used to get to the start of some of them was something else again. There were the 'mobile homes' one saw so frequently in Yosemite—often towing cars, rather than the reverse. In the wild itself I encountered four-wheel-drive vehicles, trail bikes, mountain bikes and horses. For Americans one of the fundamental freedoms, it seems, is the right to use any mechanical means they consider justified to get to their destination with the minimum of effort. This might have explained the twice-daily racket of helicopters arriving and departing from the Naiset Huts near Canada's most beautiful mountain, Mt Assiniboine, in the Assiniboine National Park.

One of the great satisfactions—and sometimes, in bad weather, a real relief—was to discover the excellent facilities at the campsites in most parks. Yet even where the only provisions were level gravel tent pads for overnight stops on the John Muir Trail in California, simple but effective bear-proof storage lockers at Yosemite, or flagpole-like arrangements for the same purpose in Canadian parks—I was impressed by the way in which the simplest facilities genuinely assisted walkers and encouraged responsible camping practice.

Europe was another matter entirely; there one encountered the delights of huts run by various organizations but had to pay for the (variable) quality of their food and lodging. Parents with small children, in particular, take advantage of such huts in the Alps. Assured of shelter and food along the way, they walk in with day packs—prepared even to carry their children if need be. The popularity of huts may also be influenced by the extraordinarily lax toilet practices of many Europeans in the mountains.

These experiences and observations relate to the Australian future in several ways. If the number of park users here is increasing, how are we to handle that increase?

The first thing is for governments to recognize the economic value of National Parks as tourist attractions and to fund them accordingly. Not only is the average Australian taking to the bush, but so is an increasing number of visitors; a smattering of French and German is as handy on the Overland Track in Tasmania as in the Pyrenees. The recognition of value would make governments realize that money needs to be directed at once to National Parks, especially to those with major attractions or on the World Heritage List, to preserve and enhance their capacity to earn income. Penny-pinching is shortsighted; what is required is good management. The impact of people on wilderness environments, which are invariably fragile and at the extremes of climate, needs to be monitored,



'People pressure.' Walkers crossing spring snow above Pont de Croë-vie, Vanoise National Park, France. Warren McLaren. **Near right**, a typical Labour Day crowd at Vernal Falls, Yosemite National Park, USA. **Far right**, eroded track at Angle Tarn, between Langdale and Wasdale in the Lake District, England. Webb

ed, contained and softened. This has been done in a number of ways overseas, and although the introduction of these methods here has provoked some outcry, they are worth considering in the light of the greater experience of other places in handling far larger numbers.

The first possible response to the pressure generated by people is to limit access. This has its difficulties. It attacks what walkers perceive as their freedom to choose what area to visit and when to

visit it; and frequently it is only practicable in areas which are naturally discrete, with barriers to access except at certain points—the Milford Track in New Zealand is an example. However, at the John Muir Trail's easily accessible southern end, at Mt Whitney, no more than 50 persons are admitted each day from May to October. The aim is to force walkers to plan, avoiding long weekends such as Labour Day, and thus to spread impact and create at least some of the loneliness that Americans crave as part of their wilderness experience.

The second response is aimed at lessening impact within the Park, and that is to improve tracks and overnight facilities, the latter by providing either huts or prepared camping areas. All the

people I met in Tasmania expressed horror at the creation of kilometres of board-walk on the South Coast Track and the wooden walk-ways at various points on the Overland Track, but these may be grim necessities if fragile areas of the landscape are to be protected. Walkers who think these are unfortunate measures might contemplate the John Muir Trail regulations, which provide for a fine

have the authorities from various Albertan and British Columbian parks in Canada) but have run up against a conservatism similar, it seems, to that encountered in Australia's own high country; horses were there at the start of man's settlement and have therefore acquired some mystical right to be there in perpetuity—an attitude nowhere more entrenched than in Australia.



of \$50 for cutting a corner on the carefully sculpted paths. The balance is hard to pick: a track which leaves intact the walker's sense of achievement; a campsite which minimizes damage but does not clash with the landscape—and both need to be sufficiently attractive to encourage the walker to use them.

The third response is to restrict access for all but pedestrians. No park I visited in North America, England or Europe allowed four-wheel-drive vehicles or trail bikes off roads at all. Mountain-bike users were pressing for access, and their cases were being heard in California and Wales while I was there. The bike users tended to be vehicle-based campers who stayed close to roadheads, and their readiness to ignore paths and create rutted tracks was making them unpopular in the Inyo State Forest in California and, in the UK, such places as the Snowdonia National Park.

Even horses have come in for some criticism in connection with movement within several National Parks in the Sierras. Contrary to the popular belief fostered by such poems and films as *The Man from Snowy River*, horses are not especially good in steep, stony country. At the Devils Postpile National Monument in California, for example, separate, more gently graded tracks had to be built for horses which carry equipment for tourists; overall impact is thus increased. The National Parks managers there and at Yosemite have sought to ban horses (as

The most distressing aspect of the use of horses or mules is their profound impact on tracks. It is not unusual to see several parallel tracks worn to a depth of a foot or more where horses and riders have walked or ridden; and their dung (though rules for the horse-riding companies in Yosemite state that it should be "broken up and dispersed") is a depressingly pungent reminder of their presence. In spring one can still trip over the occasional steaming turd, intact from the previous season.

One of the greatest obstacles in National Park policy implementation is the sometimes inflexible attitude of the park user. When I tried to dissuade a person from lighting a fire on peat in the Walls of Jerusalem the astonished reply was merely, 'But I've always lit a fire when I come here!' Private lease-holders within State parks have also strenuously opposed moves to relocate them when their leases expire. The major private leaseholder in the Yosemite Valley has come to the end of its lease and yet is seeking to avoid resettlement further down the valley, which would deprive it of its virtual monopoly on the lucrative leisure activities it runs at the roadhead.

It seems plain from the above that clear and strictly enforced policies on access and use are vital. This is not just a matter of consultation by National Parks boards with user groups. Unequivocal decisions must be made, occasionally at the expense of one or other group, and then

enforced in the field. Though anathema to some and causing snorts of derisive disbelief, it is possible that in the more heavily used areas of the Australian wilderness people may in future be 'cited' (such is the American jargon) for cutting a track bend, and be fined \$50 on the spot. I saw it happen in Yosemite, and when the Park Warden was met with a blank stare, she asked for the offender's park permit (issued free of charge) and pointed to the appropriate ruling. This may seem petty, but the offence happened within five kilometres of a roadhead; and remember that at the height of its use 30 000 people visit Yosemite every day. The potential for damage is amplified accordingly.

Overall, there is a need for an increasing commitment from our governments to recognize and respond to the national and international tourist potential of Australia's areas of wild beauty; to write more sophisticated park management



policies; to educate park users; and to enforce possibly contentious plans. For our part, those of us who visit parks must be ready to abide by what may occasionally seem like intrusive measures, but which will ensure the maintenance of the resource for future users. Over the last few years the dialogue necessary for arriving at more effective and far-sighted park policies has begun in earnest between government departments and park boards on one hand, and various users on the other. The process of consultation in the preparation of management plans for Tasmania's World Heritage Area is one example. Another is a study instituted by a large, world-wide travel industry organization, which is considering the impact of tourism on the Great Barrier Reef and the rain forests of far north Queensland. But we need more of them. It is to be hoped that in the future the pressure of people on parks will be intelligently, equitably and sensitively managed at levels which allow the parks to persist, well preserved, into the next millennium. ■

John Webb is a writer and teacher who lives in Melbourne and juggles pedagogy with the pull of the peaks and the push to be published. In 1989 he visited National Parks in Australia, the USA, England, Europe and Nepal.



WILD CANOEING

PADDLING CAPE YORK

Ron and Viv Moon in Indiana Jones country

What's that?
'Don't know. Oh, bloody hell! It's a croc!'

With that, Dave and I madly paddled our boat towards the left bank of the river.

The crocodile, head held at 45° to the water's surface, had its eyes on us, and the course it was taking seemed certain to intersect ours. For those brief seconds the world narrowed and slowed. We were getting closer to dry land, but the croc was moving fast, leaving a wake of water and disturbed water lilies. It looked big and confident—and scary!

Then, as quickly as it had appeared, it was gone. Nothing! A peaceful, still back-water on a wide sweep of the river met our unblinking gaze. Only our yells told Peter and Steve in the second canoe that this bend was any different from the miles of river behind us.

A few kilometres later we paddled out on to the magnificent Jardine River and met our support party. They were waiting for us where the Overland Telegraph Line, on its march north to the very tip of Cape York, crosses one of Australia's greatest rivers.

Just a year earlier Peter Treseder, Steve Irwin and I, along with Warwick Blayden, had canoed the length of the Jardine River from its source in the low hills of the Great Divide, just a few kilometres from the east coast, to the waters of Torres Strait.

That first complete descent of the Jardine had gone off with barely a hitch. Our group, which included my brother Dave in support, had travelled to the top of Cape York just after the end of 'the Wet'. Once at our predetermined starting point we donned rucksacks laden with inflatable canoes and ten days' supplies, and plunged into the man-eating rain forest thickets that guard the headwaters of the Jardine, Queensland's biggest perennial river.

A few hours' walking and we were able to launch the canoes. Whilst we didn't do much canoeing during the first day or so, at least the current carried our boats and packs along. Log jams were our biggest hassle—and the rips they caused in our so-called 'tough, unrippable' canoes. Well, until the first croc, that is.

We were more than 200 kilometres from the sea on a jungle-clad stream that ranged from six to just three metres in width and from four metres to 15 centimetres in depth. The water was pleasant and we alternated walking and canoeing between the twisted piles of logs. Sometimes, because the log jams were close together and the water was deep, we swam across inky black holes, pushing the boats in front of us. It wasn't nice, but it was the quickest way. 'And you wouldn't get a big croc up this far, would you', we said.

Then, in the middle of day three, a five metre croc, disturbed from his restful repose on a sunny bank, hit the water just

a couple of metres in front of Peter and Steve's boat. Pandemonium followed. Suddenly the slowly flowing river was a mêlée of flying water. The croc in his haste thrashed water everywhere, and Peter and Steve back-paddled furiously.

Warwick and I in the second canoe were not threatened—only our peace

the Cape. The mighty Archer River had been first on our list, but a late-season hurricane put paid to our designs on that. Our next choice was the Dulhunty, but while trying to chase up local information on access to that river's mouth, we had decided to 'get wet' by doing the first complete descent of Eliot



Carrying rafts down the upper reaches of Eliot Creek. **Opposite**, the party in Canadian canoes at Indian Head Falls, where the second day's paddling began. All photos Ron and Viv Moon

was disturbed—but we heeded the warning and subsequently took a lot more care. Whilst this wasn't the only encounter with crocodiles on our first trip, it was definitely the most dramatic.

A day later the river gained momentum and size as it was joined by some of its larger tributaries, and after four more days of plain paddling we arrived at the sea.

Now, a year later, we were back with a somewhat different, larger party. Dave Dickford had replaced Warwick, and our support team included my other brother Mick, my wife Viv and son Trent. This time we planned to tackle some of the more remote and less accessible rivers of

Creek, a picturesque tributary of the Jardine.

Like the Jardine, the Eliot—or parts of it—had been paddled before. Our motivation, and especially Peter's, lay in doing the first complete descent. In the case of the Eliot that meant a half-day walk in to a point where we could unload our lightly filled packs, inflate our rafts, and float and paddle down to Fruit Bat Falls. Along the way we passed over numerous low cascades, making the Eliot one of the most pleasant wilderness rivers I've paddled. Our support party met us at Fruit Bat; we changed into Canadian canoes and pushed on to Eliot or Indian Head Falls, where they met us again and we all spent the night.

The following morning mist and spray shrouded the river when we set off in the cool of dawn for a 50 kilometre dash to



the Jardine. As we drew closer to the main waterway the river changed, becoming bounded by swamps, with water races and cascades now left behind. This was crocodile country, and after the previous year's events we knew they were there. This time, as recounted in the opening paragraphs, it was my turn to have my senses assaulted and my confidence shattered.

Did we really want to paddle the Dulhenty? Whether we did or not, we all readily agreed that we didn't want to paddle across the 40 kilometres of muddy, current-wracked, crocodile-infested waters at the mouth of the river on Port Musgrave.

The Dulhenty rises in the Richardson Range, about 50 kilometres from the east coast and 100 kilometres from the northernmost tip of Australia. Where the Overland Telegraph Line track crosses it, the Dulhenty is nothing more than a pleasant, babbling stream a few metres wide. Closer to the sea it's a wide, sluggish river, torn by tropical tides and bounded by marine swamps and mangroves. A little on-the-spot research confirmed that there was no vehicle access to the river mouth; but there was an old vehicle track to a deserted mining exploration camp located on the river, about 20 kilometres inland from Port Musgrave. We were set to begin.

This time, disappointed with our inflatable rafts (and with the rubber canoes from the previous year), we paddled our Canadians upriver from the Overland Telegraph Line crossing until we couldn't go any further, and left them in place. The following day we pulled on

our packs on a high point of the range and headed through lightly timbered country towards the headwaters of the Dulhenty.

Within an hour we were walking beside a trickle of water less than half a metre wide. This stream was different again from the other two waterways we

Maybe that provoked the gods, for shortly afterwards we had two close run-ins in quick succession with even larger crocs, which left us shaken and somewhat cooled our resolve to continue. Both instances were similar to our Eliot Creek escapade, but this time the crocs were closer. In fact, on our third en-



Warwick Blayden, with inflatable canoe, negotiates log jams on the Jardine River. **Opposite.** Not a crocodile in sight! Eliot Creek hemmed by low cliffs below Indian Head Falls.

had descended in this part of Cape York. The Jardine is bounded for much of its upper length by tall trees and riverine rain forest, and flows across a sandy bottom through regular log jams; Eliot Creek is hemmed by steep banks and jammed with wood in its upper section, and later runs across a clear, flatish layer of rock. The Dulhenty, on the other hand, has no rain forest patches, and few logs. The vegetation is more open, and in parts tall sword grass grows thickly under a light canopy. In other places delightful stands of native pine, unique to this northern region, reminded us of the enclaves one finds in Tasmania's beech forests. Moss and lichen grow on the bark and the ground underneath is spongy and clear of grass and small bushes. Unfortunately our timetable didn't allow us to stop and we pushed on, reaching our canoes without drama, six hours later.

For the rest of the day we paddled downriver, passing our support party at the crossing and pushing on, the river all the while gaining in size and flow.

Next day, as the river widened, the riverine forest became thicker and in parts formed a dense canopy over and around us. At times, tall palms formed picturesque stands on the sides of the river. Everywhere, the rootings of wild pigs testified to their presence. The river continued over water races and the occasional low cascade and through long, deep, slow stretches that reeked of large reptiles. We spied a few crocodiles and, on stopping for a mid-morning break, disturbed a three metre croc from its sunny slumber.

counter they approached to within a metre before diving under Peter and Steve's boat, leaving a muddy wake in the shallow, clear water.

As evening approached we began to notice tidal marks on the river's banks. Whilst the water was still fresh, we knew we were getting closer to the sea—and to our support party. By the time we met them the banks were steep and the stream jammed with logs. The tide was on the run in, but still had nearly a metre to go before it peaked.

From our support party we learned that the river was just a patchwork of logs at low tide; and then there were the crocs! Our confidence had taken a hammering, and so we decided to use our Achilles inflatable boat and outboard motor to try to reach the open water of Port Musgrave on the one high tide of the next day. It turned out to be a race against time and an ever-falling water level, but we just made it to the sea and back. Half an hour longer and we would have spent a day and a night in the middle of the swamp—a sobering thought.

The expedition was almost over, but there was one last thing to do. Back in Cairns we visited Hartley Creek Crocodile Farm and took a look at those creatures that had shaken our confidence so badly. They looked just as mean in captivity, but the feeling was delightfully different.

And next year? The Archer River still beckons, and next time we'll plan for every eventuality—even a late-season hurricane! ■

Ron and Viv Moon have had a long love affair with Cape York—and with anything related to the bush. They have produced a book entitled Cape York—An Adventurer's Guide, and founded [sic] the now defunct magazine Action Outdoor Australia. They mix canoeing, diving and four-wheel-drive touring with a little rockclimbing and bushwalking.

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SKI TOURING IN THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS

A guide to Australia's best skiing for the novice tourer,
by David Noble



Many skiers are getting fed up with crowded downhill slopes and the associated expense of accommodation and lift tickets. It is therefore not surprising that ski touring is becoming more popular. Some of the places described below are suitable for those just beginning to master the art of travelling on thin skis. Before venturing to the more remote areas it is essential to learn how to navigate with a map, how to find your way in bad weather and how to cope with nasty conditions such as icy ridge-tops. These skills are probably best gained in the company of more experienced ski tourers.

The places described below are all within Kosciuszko National Park in southern New South Wales. The descriptions proceed from the northern end of the park in a clockwise direction to the southern end. It is essential to carry a map, compass and basic survival equipment when ski touring in these areas.

Maps

The 1:25 000 and 1:50 000 maps produced by the Central Mapping Authority of NSW are quite good for general navigation and are to be preferred to the older Natmap 1:100 000 sheets. For some areas, such as Mt Selwyn, one NSW Ski Association map may save carrying several CMA sheets. In addition to the maps mentioned in each section below, the National Parks & Wildlife Service publishes a small map showing the marked cross-country trails near Dry Dam (Cabramurra), Three Mile Dam (Mt Selwyn) and the Perisher Range.

Kiandra

Maps. CMA 1:25 000 *Cabramurra and West Denison*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Yarrangobilly and Tantalara*; NSW Ski Association 1:25 000 *Mt Selwyn Ski Touring Map*.

The gentle slopes near Kiandra are ideal places for beginners learning to cross-country ski or starting snow camping. Being lower

Spectacular ski touring on 'the roof of Australia'. The Main Range, Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales. Both photos David Noble

than other parts of the Snowy Mountains, Kiandra often has only a poor cover of snow. In good seasons, however, the area is a delight, with short downhill runs which zigzag through snow gums being the main attraction. In addition, it is spared the extremes of weather that affect other areas. In the Kiandra region there are three places from which people start out:

Kiandra. From the highway it is possible to park cars near the Department of Main Roads depot and ski up the hill on to a flat, broad ridge. This ridge leads to snow pole routes that branch out from Selwyn Quarry.

Selwyn Quarry is the most popular starting point for ski tours in the Kiandra region. Just before the main car-park is a smaller area for

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overnight parking. From the top of the tows, snow poles lead round a short cross-country circuit. Set out along the right-hand branch and after 20 minutes you will be on the same broad ridge that is described above, leading out from Kiandra. From here, many ski-tourers head south along a road that at first dips down through a short section of trees and then leads out towards Mt Tabletop. On the way to Tabletop are many sheltered places to camp, with water often close by. Two huts—Four Mile Hut and Broken Dam Hut—lie only a short distance off the ridge. There are many excellent ski runs through moderately dense snow gums on the slopes that lead down from the main ridge.

The ski out to Mt Tabletop and the climb to the top are worth the effort. A frontal assault on the northern side may necessitate removing skis and carrying them up a short, steep, rocky section. In fine weather there are excellent views, and even a fairly sheltered campsite in a small gully on the summit plateau.

Three Mile Dam, a short distance along the Cabramurra road, is the other option, and is especially popular with beginners and family groups wanting to camp reasonably close to their cars. Near the dam is a small car-park with some notices giving an indication of the ski trails. Many gentle routes lead off from here. It is possible to ski round the dam or on a short circuit south of the road. From this circuit another snow pole route leads to Selwyn Quarry. Camping is possible almost anywhere in the forest on both sides of the road although the peninsula jutting out into the dam is exposed in windy weather. Further down the road at Dry Dam (near Cabramurra) there are a number of marked ski touring trails up to 15 kilometres long.

Eucumbene

Maps. CMA 1:50 000 *Eucumbene*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Berridale*.

The Eucumbene entry point into the National Park is a good alternative for ski-tourers who want to avoid the long car queues near Lindabyne. In good snow conditions it can provide an interesting way for experienced skiers to reach Mt Jagungal in a weekend. After driving across Eucumbene Dam, a dirt road leads uphill on the right. One can usually drive up to a quarry just before a steep cutting with a gate. This gate is sometimes locked and most drivers park below it. From here continue walking or skiing uphill until you can head west. In good seasons some delightful skiing can be enjoyed in the basins between Adams and Kellys Huts. These are private huts and should not be relied upon for shelter. In leaner snow conditions it may be necessary to follow the road to the summit of Bald Hill. From here it is possible to ski along a ridge line (which dips into some deep saddles) to Crooks Racecourse, which is on the main route from Kiandra south to Mt Kosciuszko. Spencers Peak and Mt Jagungal beckon from here.

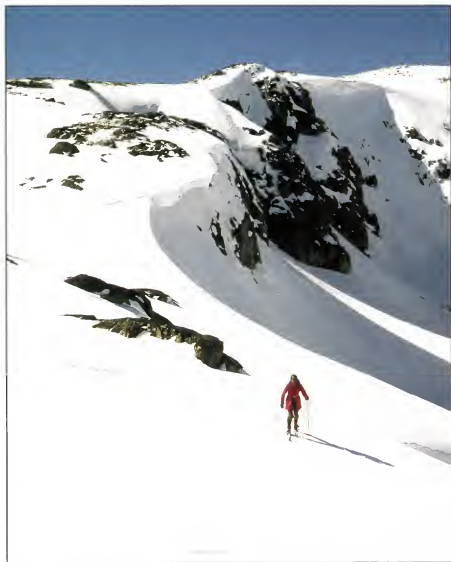
Munyang

Maps. CMA 1:50 000 *Mount Kosciuszko*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Kosciuszko*.

Guthega Power Station on the Munyang River, which is reached from the Island Bend-Guthega road, is one of the most popular setting-out points for ski-tourers. Park at

the power station. First comes a short, steep section of zigzag road. (In good seasons people speak of 'top-to-bottom' skiing at Munyang; this road can provide a fun downhill run home late on a Sunday afternoon.) Then more gentle slopes lead off up a broad valley, often referred to as the 'Whites River corridor'. This normally has a reasonable cover of snow and is fairly

route until it levels out at an aqueduct. This can be difficult to recognize under snow, but the route is very easy to follow. Further up the valley, the aqueduct passes a small, grotty hut. From here, relatively open and gentle routes climb through the trees to the crest of Disappointment Spur, or one can continue up the aqueduct until it joins the road near Whites River Hut.



Cornice country above Blue Lake.

sheltered, and is therefore very popular with beginners. About two kilometres along the road is the signposted turn-off to Horsecamp Hut, a small shelter on the western side. Further up, just off the road on the left, is the disgustingly grotty Whites River Hut, perhaps most famous as a breeding ground for stomach bugs. When looking for drinking water here, it is wise to avoid any of the creeks which drain below this hut.

An alternative route from the power station starts near the bottom of the hill, but takes the right-hand route between the hill and the switch-yard instead of the road. A short distance further, it crosses the river on a small bridge and then climbs steeply up an often icy

From Whites River Hut it is a short distance uphill to Schlink Pass and the ski touring Mecca that lies beyond.

It is possible to gain access to the Rolling Ground by skiing up the short, steep slope west of Schlink Pass, just to the south of Mt Dicky Cooper Bogong; or, more directly, by leaving the road just beyond the crest of the hill above Guthega Power Station. After an initial, short band of trees, this spur is fairly open and not too steep.

Guthega

Maps. CMA 1:50 000 *Mount Kosciuszko*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Kosciuszko*; NSW Ski Association 1:25 000 *Perisher* and *Thredbo Ski Touring Maps*.

Some of the more straightforward routes on to the Main Range begin at the small resort of

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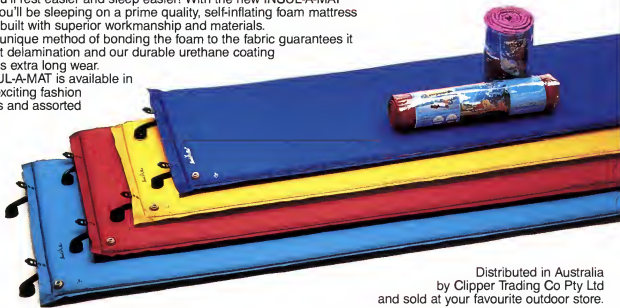


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Guthega. Late in the winter or during a poor season this is often the best place from which to set out. For overnight snow camping during the official season, it is necessary to leave cars at the lower car-park, a kilometre or so below the resort. Most people drive up to the resort, drop off gear and passengers and then park their cars below. Note that there are many

good campsites below the snow line at Island Bend for day trippers.

After leaving the resort, ski down the four-wheel-drive road towards Guthega Pondage. Once at the dam wall, several routes are possible. One way is to cross the dam and then head towards Mt Tate and the Rolling Ground. Another is to stay on the eastern side

of the pondage and ski towards Illawong, a private lodge further up the Snowy River valley.

Mt Tate and Guthega West Ridge. Cross the wall of Guthega Pondage. From here, a fairly open spur known as Guthega West Ridge leads up to the Rolling Ground. This is an excellent route to the tops, and the side of the ridge holds its snow very well even in otherwise poor seasons. At the initial crest of the ridge, little more than an hour's skiing from the resort, there are some sheltered campsites and a trig station. From here, gentler but occasionally icy slopes lead up to the Rolling Ground and Conssett Stephen Pass. This is a good area for beginners, but all skiers should exercise care with navigation as the top of the ridge can be very hard to pick up in white-out conditions.

Alternatively, the valley can be followed straight up from the west side of the dam wall to Conssett Stephen Pass. Narrow and steep-sided at first, the valley soon opens up and skiing becomes easier. Good, sheltered campsites can be found along the way. By crossing the creek early (at a foot-bridge) it is a fairly easy climb to the large ridge that leads down off Mt Tate. This mountain is an excellent goal; its broad flanks provide first-class downhill runs.

The Snowy valley. Head down towards the dam, but just before reaching it, climb up slightly on the left and follow a track that sides round the lake. This soon crosses a small creek spanned by a flying fox, for use if the water level is high. After skirting the lake, head down to the gentle floor of the valley towards Illawong Lodge. This privately owned hut somehow, extraordinarily, remains standing in a region where most other huts have been removed under the National Park management plan. Most parties cross the Snowy River on the suspension bridge just below the lodge and then climb up towards Pounds Creek and Mt Twynam. Above lie some magnificent downhill runs. There are high but sheltered campsites to be found in the basins on the lee (eastern) side of the Main Range. Lower down, near the tree line, are many campsites among snow gums.

Many ski from here towards Blue Lake, or further south towards Mt Kosciuszko. In good conditions it is possible to ski along the crest of the Main Range, climbing all the peaks on the way and enjoying side trips to places like Watsons Crags. Often, however, this high-level route is very icy and requires considerable care. It is also habitually shrouded in cloud and great caution needs to be taken to avoid skiing over cornices.

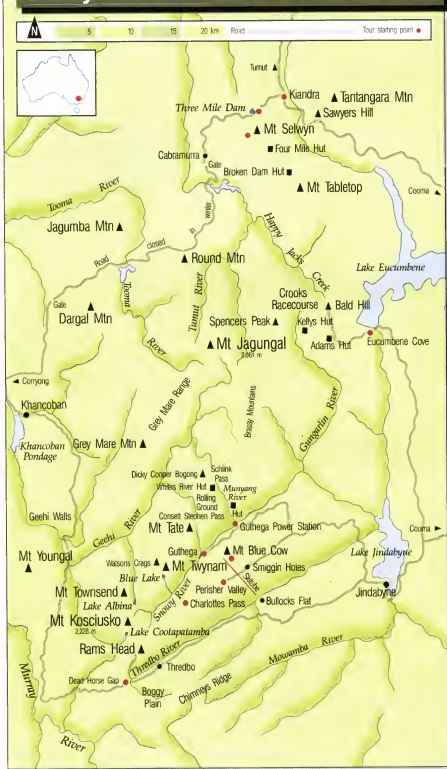
A good weekend trip that can be completed in a day by fast parties is the circuit round Guthega Pondage over Mt Tate and Mt Twynam.

Mt Blue Cow

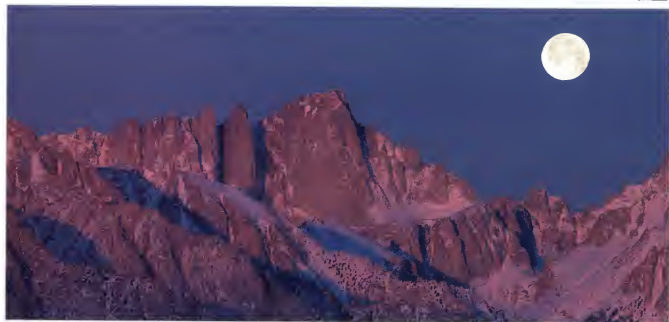
Maps. CMA 1:50 000 *Mount Kosciuszko*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Kosciuszko*; NSW Ski Association 1:25 000 *Perisher Ski Touring Map*.

The underground railway that goes to Perisher and Mt Blue Cow provides another avenue to the mountains for the ski tourist. From the top station it is fairly easy to ski down towards the Snowy valley, but this route does not offer any advantages over going from Guthega. Some ski touring trails near Mt Blue

Snowy Mountains



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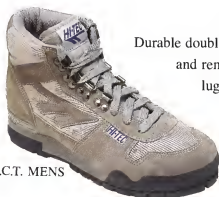


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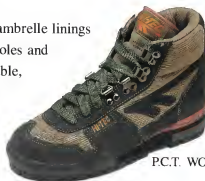
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TRACK NOTES

Cow would suit beginners, and it is possible to camp nearby in the head of some of the small side-valleys of the Snowy River. Perhaps what the railway does best for ski tourers is provide a good, quick way to get up high for day trips.

Perisher

Maps. CMA 1:50 000 *Mount Kosciuszko*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Kosciuszko*; NSW Ski Association 1:25 000 *Perisher Ski Touring Map*.

If you can stand the hordes, both Smiggin Holes and Perisher are suitable starting places for short, easy day trips. Both have poled cross-country trails of varying lengths.

Charlottes Pass

Maps. CMA 1:50 000 *Mount Kosciuszko*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Kosciuszko*; NSW Ski Association 1:25 000 *Thredbo Ski Touring Map*.

Both early and late in the season it is possible to drive almost all the way to Charlottes Pass beyond Perisher. From the pass, it is an easy ski up the road towards Mt Kosciuszko. The Wilkinson Creek valley between Kosciuszko and Townsend frequently offers both sheltered campsites and fine skiing when all else is bare. Alternatively, one can head out towards Blue Lake from the pass by crossing the Snowy River.

Dead Horse Gap

Maps. CMA 1:50 000 *Mount Kosciuszko* and *Thredbo*; Natmap 1:100 000 *Kosciuszko* and *Jacobs River*; NSW Ski Association 1:25 000 *Thredbo Ski Touring Map*.

The highest point on the Alpine Way provides a quick route on to the Main Range by the Rams Head. Leave cars at a small parking area 100 metres on the Thredbo side of a bridge just near the gap. Walk across the bridge and then drop down to a foot-bridge that spans a small stream coming in from the west (this foot-bridge is not marked on most maps). From here climb steeply at first and then more gently as the ridge becomes increasingly defined. Alternatively, it is possible to park at the gap itself and ski directly up towards the Rams Head (or climb from the road bridge mentioned above without crossing the foot-bridge); there is little to choose between these routes. Good camping is possible at the crest of the spur just near the tree line. Beyond, Lake Coota-patamba (also known as Lake May) is a popular destination in fine conditions, but camping is no longer permitted there. From the lake it is very easy to ski up on to Mt Kosciuszko and not much further to the Wilkinson valley. Mt Townsend and Lake Albina. Some prefer to avoid the climb from the gap and catch the Crackenback chair-lift up from Thredbo, then follow the snow pole route to Kosciuszko.

Another very worthwhile route from Dead Horse Gap heads south-east from the car-park near the road bridge mentioned above. Ski along a road, up a series of sheltered valleys that lead towards Boggy Plain. This area is suitable for beginners and is often relatively sheltered while the Main Range is experiencing bad weather. Many good campsites can be found here. ■

David Noble has been a Special Adviser to *Wild* from our second issue. He is one of the best-known bushwalkers in New South Wales and an authority on walking and canyoning in the Blue Mountains, as well as a much published wilderness photographer.

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BOOTS FOR SKI TOURING AND XCD

Glenn Tempest wades through the latest in 'ski-skier interface technology'

Ten years ago it was a relatively simple matter to go out and buy a pair of cross-country ski boots. The choice was limited to a few models, most of which had the torsional rigidity of an old thong and would repel as much water as a damp sponge. Many skiers found their heels dragging in the snow while performing the most basic snow ploughs. My own first ski trip to Blue Lake, a decade ago, was something of a disaster. Having been talked into carrying a 25 kilogram pack while using lightweight boots designed for track skiing, I slipped, fell and body-planted my way along the crusty trail. I sat in the snow after skiing for only a kilometre, wrung out my waterlogged boots and wondered whether I would ever reach Blue Lake.

Since then, there has been an explosion in the sport's popularity, from track skiing and light day-touring through to back-country touring and lift-served Telemarking. This diverse growth has resulted in competition between manufacturers to produce a wide range of high-quality ski footwear, and boots for touring and XCD now form a large part of the world ski-boot market. Australia plays an increasingly important role in the development of the sport. Some of the boots in this survey were designed with the help of Australian skiers.

An initial problem in putting together a survey of boots for touring and turning was how to classify them in terms of use. I finally decided on four categories, which take into account weight, torsional rigidity and flex as well as sole construction and upper stiffness.

Light touring (LT): designed primarily for recreational, off-track, day skiing.

Touring (T): for overnight use and extended ski tours, where turning on steep slopes is of secondary importance.

Heavy touring (HT): heavier and usually stiffer versions of the above. These boots are meant for skiers who want the best combination of touring and turning characteristics.

Cross-country downhill (XCD): high-performance models, purely for turning. Commonly used in Telemark competitions and for steep-gully skiing, these boots were either not designed for touring at all or can be used for touring only with some compromise in comfort.

The table gives the measured weight of a single boot, including all extras such as laces, buckles and foot-beds. This does not tally in every case with the advertised weight. Height was measured at the mid-point of the heel, viewed from the side, and does not include fixed gaiters, rear spoilers or added snow-cuffs.



Hmm, nice and flexible. Boot testing in the Snowy Mountains, New South Wales. David Noble

The boots in this survey must be used with one of two main binding types. The 75 millimetre (or three-pin) system was around when Noah sailed through the wettest snow season on record. Three-pin bindings are simple and effective. Three holes in the sole under the toe of the boot are positioned on three 'pins' which protrude from the binding-plate, and a hinged 'bail' clamps the toe of the boot in place; the rest of the boot is free to flex. The large area on which the bail bites results in a high degree of control, especially lateral control.

There are many three-pin bindings on the market—not all created equal. Some are very light and are unsuitable for touring and turning with heavy boots; they are prone to bending and may even break. An added disadvantage of lightweight bindings with wire bails is that the wire will eventually cut into the welt of bigger boots and damage the stitching. The best 75 millimetre bindings for most purposes are those with a broad, metal bail which locks the boot securely into a thick-walled binding-plate.

Those interested in avoiding damage to the three pin-holes in the soles of their 75 millimetre boots might consider cable bindings. Instead of a bail, these have a strong,

adjustable cable secured around the heel with a throw-lever to hold the boot in the binding. 'Cables' were very popular many years ago and are making something of a come-back.

The NNN BC (New Nordic Norm Back-country) bindings and boots, now in their second season in Australia, are the only real alternative to the 75 millimetre system for off-track touring and XCD skiing. They have several notable design features. Because the binding incorporates a pivot, the boot need not flex for the heel to be raised. Consequently, NNN BC boots can be built so that they flex—if at all—at a point further back which corresponds with the natural flex of the foot. This 'integrated pivot-point' also positions the skier closer to the balance-point of the ski and, in theory, improves striding performance. In addition, grooves in the sole of the boot lock firmly on to a steering-plate on the ski for a high degree of lateral and torsional stability when the heel is down. NNN BC boots are not burdened with the conspicuous, square-cut 75 millimetre toe, which can hinder both walking and scrambling. The bindings are easy to step into and out of, and are symmetrical: there is no distinction between left and right.

So which system will deliver the goods? To find out, a number of skiers tested each in a variety of situations. Not surprisingly, both were good—but in different circumstances. It soon became clear that 'three-pins' held their

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own when it came to Telemarking, on steep ground or at speed. This is partly due to the way the binding locks so solidly around the toe, and also because a large selection of beefy 75 millimetre boots is available. These factors add up to more control on steeper slopes.

The NNN BC system was the clear winner for touring. It gave a smooth, easy stride and surprising stability; and, to be fair, some skiers feel that, given the right boots—and some familiarity with their unusual flex pattern—the NNN BC combination is an excellent downhill performer, too. All the same, it was designed for touring and *light* Telemarking, not for full-bore XCD skiing.

Some 75 millimetre boots have thicker soles, measured at the toe, than others; as well, the clearance between the ball of a binding and its base-plate varies from one model to the next. Consequently, some boots simply will not fit in some bindings. If the fit is too loose the boot will pop out and the pin-holes may well be damaged in the process. If too tight, it may be impossible to close the bail. If possible, select bindings to fit your boots, rather than the reverse, and keep the **sole thickness** in mind when doing so.

All NNN BC soles are made of a plastic called Pebax with inserts of rubber. The most popular and hardest wearing 75 millimetre sole material is the classic Vibram. Most Vibram-soled boots use a Norwegian welt, generally acknowledged as the strongest method of attaching upper to sole. The well-known Skywalk soles are not as robust as their Vibram cousins, but are favoured amongst the lighter touring boots.

The **shank** is a piece of stiff material—usually steel or nylon—which is embedded in the sole of the boot. In conjunction with the mid-sole, the shank stiffens the sole to the degree required.

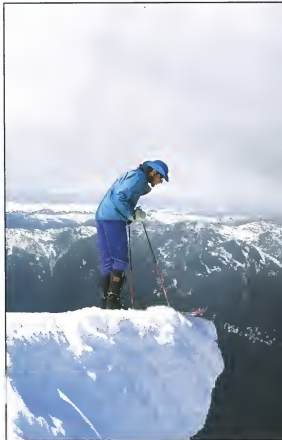
Most hefty models have **uppers** constructed of full-grain leather. This is expensive, but is the strongest, most hard-wearing leather available. It should be treated with Sno-Seal or some similar product which will protect, nourish and waterproof the leather and substantially extend the life of the boots. Some manufacturers—Scarpa and Asolo, for example—impregnate their leathers to limit water absorption. Full-grain leather is

usually between 2.5 and 3 millimetres thick. Most lighter boots use split-grain leather, which is more porous than full-grain and is usually coated with polyurethane to help to keep water out. Some new models from Alpina have uppers which combine leather with panels of Cordura.

Makers use a host of different materials with technical-sounding names to line boots, but all are trying to achieve similar results. The **lining** must resist abrasion but be soft enough to mould comfortably to the shape of the foot. It must be capable of drawing away perspiration, which would otherwise make the foot uncomfortably damp. Many manufacturers use a synthetic material called Cambrelle for this purpose. Between the leather upper and the innermost fabric is usually a thin layer of thermal insulation. This is particularly important to skiers who suffer from cold feet and to those who spend long periods in cold conditions on extended ski tours. The most frequently used insulating materials are Thinsulate and EVA (sometimes known as Evapor) foam.

Most of the boots surveyed are closed by a bellows tongue made of either leather or a synthetic material such as Cordura. Some have a double tongue, which further improves their ability to keep out snow and water and is another feature often favoured by skiers who remain out in the cold—touring or turning—for long periods. Lacing is still the most common method of tightening boots, but there has been a move recently towards the use of Velcro straps and plastic, ratchet-style buckles. These certainly help to secure the boot around the foot with a minimum of slop, and are finding favour not only with lit-serviced Telemarkers but among back-country gully-skiers as well.

Take great care to choose the right size when buying boots. Don't go for the trendiest ones on the block if they're going to kill your feet. Make sure you have plenty of toe room, but not at the expense of a snug fit around the foot; if you can't have one without sacrificing the other, consider trying a different model. Modern free-heel boots don't take very long to break in, but play it safe: don't use them on long trips to start with. Take them out for a day first, and carry something to treat blisters, just



David Rogers cleared for take-off, Mt Feathertop, Victoria. **Matt Darby**

in case. The final choice of a pair of ski boots should rest with your feet.

You'll soon realize that, of all the various items of cross-country ski equipment, a good pair of boots is the most important. With good boots you can enjoy skiing on a pair of fence palings, but the best skis won't help if you have nothing but slippers on your feet. ■

Glenn Tempest (see Contributors in Wild no 4) has been a Special Adviser to Wild since our second issue. A renowned racconneur, climber and mountain photographer, Glenn is an experienced and enthusiastic cross-country skier.

Wild Gear Survey Boots for Ski Touring and XCD

Use	Measured weight, kilo-grams, boot size 6-42	Measured height, kilo-grams, boot size 6-42	Binding type	Sole thickness at toe, millimetres	Sole material	Welt	Shank material	Upper material, thickness, millimetres	Lining material	Obitort	Comments	Approx price, £
Achilles Italy												
Husky	T	0.89	19	75	15	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 3.0	Cambrelle	Lacing, bellows tongue	290
Caribou	HT	1.05	18	75	15	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	Cambrelle	Lacing, double tongue	315
Alfa Norway												
Voss	LT	0.83	16.5	NNN BC	-	Pebax/rubber	Cement bonded	na	Split-grain, 2.0	na	Lacing, bellows tongue	185
Aspen	LT	0.89	18	NNN BC	-	As above	As above	na	As above	na	Wide last	280
Alco Italy												
Backcountry Tour	T	0.94	14.5	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Nylon	Split-grain, PU-coated	Treswell, EVA	Lacing, bellows tongue	245
Mountain Ski	T	0.99	16.5	75	17	Vibram	Norwegian	na	Full-grain	Cambrelle, Thinsulate	Lacing, double tongue	265
Veldi	HT	1.00	17	75	17	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 2.6	Cambrelle	Lacing, bellows tongue	250
Teletour	HT	1.00	19	75	17	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 3.0	Treswell, EVA	Lacing, double tongue	285
Super Telemark	XCD	1.24	19.5	75	20	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	Cambrelle, Thinsulate	As above	340



Hiker



Lightweight Walkers



Montana Boots



Kalahari Boots



Randonnee



Trail

KALAHARI BOOTS

A very comfortable, smart looking boot for urban explorations, travel to wild places and light trail walking. The upper is made of a Nubuk leather, a new, fashionable leather treated to a high level of waterproofness. Dresses up well enough for cafes. Durable enough for seven-day treks. Skywalk sole and full leather lining. Made in Italy.

Sizes 36-48

Price \$179.50

HIKER

This boot provides excellent value with Italian walking boot quality. Stratos Skywalk sole, single-piece upper and Cambrelle lining make it ideal for day walks and lighter-terrain bushwalking.

Sizes 36-48

Price \$109.50

RANDONNEE

Boots for wilderness walking, made in Italy to an exacting standard. Built on a very comfortable last, these boots have a durable, weatherproof single-piece leather upper attached to a Traction Skywalk sole. The sole and nylon mid-sole combine to provide the right 'stiffness' throughout for stability and traction in the toughest of terrain.

Sizes 36-48

Price \$179.00

LIGHTWEIGHT WALKERS

At only 800 gms per pair (size 40) these are a lightweight version of our classic Kathmandu Walkers. Made with the same care and attention by the same craftspeople. The shoe incorporates a microporous Vibram sole and an idrostop (waterproof) leather.

Sizes 36-48

Price \$189.50

RANDONNEE SYMPATEX

This is the Randonnee boot with an interlining of Sympatex. Sympatex is a waterproof/breathable membrane which further adds to the boot's waterproof qualities.

Sizes 36-48

Price \$199.50

BOOT CARE

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WHEN BOOTS ARE CLEAN AND DRY

TRAIL

A solidly made bushwalking boot for rugged terrain, the TRAIL features a single-piece anfibio-calf leather upper which is strongly stitched to the mid-sole. The Vibram Montagnablock sole can be replaced (though it should only need it after years of wear).

Bellows tongue with hook and D-ring lacing.

Sizes 36-48

Price \$179.50

MONTANA BOOTS

These represent value together with consistent and reliable Italian manufacture. Take them to Tasmania, crocodile country or backcountry Victoria — they're equally at home in any wild location. Well tested (we've now sold this model for seven years), the Montana boot consists of a leather/Cordura upper, bellows tongue and well-padded ankle. The Traction Skywalk sole is bonded with a protective rubber rand which runs right around the boot.

Sizes 36-47

Price \$149.50

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Wild Gear Survey Boots for Ski Touring and XCD continued

	Use	Measured weight, kilograms, boot size 8-12	Measured height, centimeters, boot size 8-12	Binding type	Sole thickness at toe, millimeters	Sole material	Welt	Shank material	Upper material, thickness, millimeters	Lining material	Closure	Comments	Approx. price, \$
Alpine/Touring													
NBC 800	LT	0.57	15.5	NNN BC	-	Pebax/rubber	Cement bonded	na	Split-grain, PU-coated, Cordura	Fleece, Thinsulate	Lacing	Padded cuff	150
Serra	LT	0.69	17	75	na	Alpine rubber	As above	Nylon	Split-grain, PU-coated, Cordura	Cambrelle	Lacing, leather/nylon bellows tongue	As above	150
Bergen	LT	0.67	18.5	75	na	Vibram	As above	Metal	Full-grain, 2.0	Cambrelle, Thinsulate	As above	Lacing	175
NBC 1000	LT	0.67	18	NNN BC	-	Pebax/rubber	As above	na	Split-grain, PU-coated, Cordura	As above	Lacing	As above	215
NBC 1500	T	0.75	19	NNN BC	-	As above	As above	na	Full-grain, 2.5	As above	Lacing	As above	225
NBC 2000	HT	0.90	22	NNN BC	-	As above	As above	na	Split-grain, PU-coated, 2.5	As above	Lacing	Hinged PU cuff, custom modes	245
Arkon Italy													
Cornice	T	0.92	17.5	75	16	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 2.5	Cambrelle	Lacing, bellows tongue	Wide last	230
Lady Cornice	T	0.92	17.5	75	16	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	Cambrelle	As above	Narrow last	240
Zenith	HT	1.15	20	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 3.0	Cambrelle	Lacing, buckles, Cordura/leather tongue	As above	290
Tele Comp	XCD	2.00	35	75	19	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	Cambrelle	Lacing, 3 buckles, strap, Cordura/leather/plastic tongue	Double boot, hinged Hyneil cuff	650
Artex Italy													
BCX 43	LT	0.63	18	NNN BC	-	Pebax/rubber	Cement bonded	na	Full-grain, 2.5	Tesset, Thinsulate	Lacing, double tongue	PU collar	195
BCX 41	LT	0.55	18.5	NNN BC	-	As above	As above	na	Split-grain, PU-coated, 2.0	Velour, Thinsulate	Lacing, bellows tongue	As above	205
BCX 45	LT	0.68	18	NNN BC	-	As above	As above	na	As above	As above	As above	Nylon collar	320
Asolo Italy													
Snowfield II	T	1.00	18	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 2.5	Cambrelle, EVA	Lacing	Cordura collar	255
Snowpine	HT	1.10	20	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 3.0	As above	Lacing, Cordura/EVA tongue	As above	310
Extreme	XCD	1.20	22	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	Lacing	Pebax-reinforced upper	390
Summit	XCD	1.30	20.5	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	Lacing	Double boot	460
Extreme Racer	XCD	1.80	na	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	4 Buckles, double tongue	As above	530
Disport Italy													
Trial	LT	0.74	18	75	12	Skywalk	Cement bonded	na	Full-grain	Cambrelle	Lacing, double tongue	Soft cuff	180
Estimo	LT	0.75	19	75	12	Skywalk	As above	na	Split-grain, PU-coated, 2.0	Cambrelle	Lacing, bellows tongue	As above	185
Riad	LT	0.77	18.5	75	12	Skywalk	As above	na	Full-grain	Cambrelle	As above	Soft cuff	210
La Robusta Italy													
Tour	T	1.10	17.5	75	12	Skywalk	Cement bonded	Nylon	Full-grain, 2.5	Cambrelle, Sympatex	Lacing, padded bellows tongue	As above	na
Merrill Italy													
Touring Rammer	LT	0.68	18.5	75	12	Merrill Touring	Cement bonded	na	Split-grain, PU-coated, 2.0	Thinsulate	Lacing	Cordura cuff	175
Telemark II	T	0.88	18.5	75	16	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	Tesset, EVA	Lacing, Cordura tongue	Cordura cuff	270
Legend	HT	0.98	19.5	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 3.0	As above	As above	As above	350
Ultra	HT	1.15	21	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	As above	As above	425
Super Double	XCD	1.25	20.5	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	Lacing	Double boot	520
Super Comp	XCD	2.00	35	75	19	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	Lacing, 3 buckles, strap, double tongue	Double boot, hinged Hyneil cuff	710
Maxx	XCD	na	na	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian, Lifeway	Steel	As above	As above	As above	Hinged Hyneil cuff	na
One Sport Italy													
Regular	HT	1.10	20	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	na	Full-grain	Cambrelle	Lacing	Cut/gater	300
Racing	XCD	1.40	28	75	19	Vibram	Norwegian	na	Full-grain	Nylon	Lacing, 2 straps	Cut/gater, calf support	410
Scarpa Italy													
Tour	T	0.93	17	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 2.8	Cambrelle	Lacing	As above	280
Norlux	HT	1.10	17	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	Full-grain, 3.0	Cambrelle, EVA	Lacing	As above	300
Tele Comp	HT	1.25	21	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	Lacing, double tongue	Narrow last	370
Tele Tour	XCD	1.30	21	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	Lacing, buckles, double tongue	As above	385
Tele Express	XCD	1.35	22.5	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	As above	Lacing, padded double tongue	Salpa-reinforced upper	430
Tele Station	XCD	1.55	27.5	75	18	Vibram	Norwegian	Steel	As above	Cambrelle, Thinsulate, EVA	Lacing, 2 buckles, double tongue	Pebax cuff, Salpa-reinforced upper	450

na information not available



Photo: Glenn Burgess

BIG RUCKSACKS FOR A BIG COUNTRY

New for 1991

With generous capacities and practical features, the new Cyclops II Citadel and Atlas have both been designed with Australian conditions in mind.

The most accurate fit

The Cyclops II Citadel and Atlas are made in three back sizes: 2, 3 and 4. We don't expect you to fall for unreliable and compromising one-size-fits-all variable back-length rucksacks. With permanent proportions, optimum geometry and fine adjustments, Cyclops II harnesses simply provide the most accurate fit and trouble-free performance. (The smaller sizes are most suitable for women. Size 3 capacities are quoted.)

Carrying comfort

A central channel accommodates and protects the spine, and improves ventilation. Broad, hip-hugging lumbar contact areas efficiently

transfer the load. Contoured Cyclops II harnesses are kind to your body and easy on your clothing—all body-contact surfaces are made from synthetic, cotton-like Berghaus Advent fabric.

Bombproof

Naturally, Cyclops II rucksacks feature Berghaus-developed Ardura 1000 cloth; robust, 25 mm aluminium-alloy frames; reinforced bases; bar-tacked stress points and double-sewn and bound seams. Where appropriate, the hip-belt and side compression-straps continue through the back of the rucksack for unfailing, all-round strength.

Functional

Other Cyclops II features include: extendible lid; twin lid accessory straps; two lid pockets; top, internal compression-strap; Weatherlock closure; accessory patches; quick-release, non-slip hip-belt Bergbuckle; ice axe loops; tent-wand pockets.

Cyclops II Citadel

Large-capacity, dual-compartment rucksack. Curved-zip access to bottom compartment, draw-cord divider.

Capacity: 75–85 litres

Back sizes: 2, 3, 4

Cyclops II Atlas

Huge expedition rucksack. Zip access at base. Twin removable side-pockets zip together to form a day pack.

Capacity: 100 litres

Back sizes: 2, 3, 4

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SNOW-CAMPING ACCESSORIES

Cold comfort—a *Wild* survey

Digging in for the Winter

Camping in the snow—the mere mention of it is enough to make some people shiver (even after reading *Wild Ideas*, *Wild* no 39). However, the initiated are aware that the right equipment and a bit of common sense—not to mention plenty of hot brews—can make snow camping a 'piece of cake'. It's clear even to the 'instant shiverer' that a suitable tent is vital; but what about all those other little bits and pieces that contribute to a pleasant winter camp-out?

The first requirement is a lightweight *snow shovel* for levelling a tent platform and digging a trench outside the tent door to sit in while donning or removing boots—or for excavating a snow cave. There are many brands around, including Black Diamond, Life Link, Salewa, Voilé and Witco; don't expect much change from \$100! A folding *snow saw* can come in handy when cutting blocks for igloos or wind-breaks.

The tent must be made secure. Specialized *snow pegs* cost a couple of dollars each and are available in various lengths, up to 50 centimetres (or see *Trix* on page 79 for an alternative). When living in a snow cave or an igloo, you can stick pegs in the wall as hooks for hanging up packs, jackets and stuff sacks. There are many ways of securing a tent, so take a spare length of three millimetre *nylon cord* (95 cents a metre) to tie round trees, rocks or skis stuck in the snow. Be warned, though: it can be a real challenge to dismantle one of these creations when the whole lot is frozen solid. For camping in exposed, windy places, add a length of five millimetre *shock-cord* (about \$3.00 a metre) or a section of tyre inner tube to your tent guys; this takes some of the stress off the tent and the anchors. *Sierra Designs Grip Clips* (RRP \$12.95 each) allow additional guys to be attached temporarily to any part of the tent fly.

Some folks supplement their sleeping mat with a layer of thin *closed-cell foam* under the tent, or inside, as a liner. Three millimetre foam from Outgear costs RRP \$7.00 a metre. A 30 x 40 centimetre piece of thicker closed-cell foam (ten millimetre; RRP \$28 a metre) makes an excellent seat at the tent door or in a snow shelter and during lunch breaks. A lightweight *groundsheet* is extremely useful, especially when using snow shelters. A DB Stuff nylon groundsheet sells for RRP \$38.75, and a Space All Weather Blanket for RRP \$31.

Once ensconced, it's time for domestics (though not, we hope, the argumentative kind). An aluminium-alloy skewer tent peg bent into an 'S' is ideal to suspend a light from the tab found at the top of most tents. *Candles* are a cheap light source, but many skiers opt for a *candle lantern*. Different models, made by



A dusting of fresh snow is the icing on many a cake. Early morning among snow gums. Mark Ashkanasy

Coghlan's, Trangia, Northern Lights and UCO, cost between RRP \$16.95 and \$54. A *headlamp* (see Equipment, *Wild* no 39) leaves your hands free and is handy when cooking, eating and reading.

Many tents are equipped with internal pockets to help you to keep your belongings in order. Three millimetre cord can be used to create overhead storage and hanging possibilities, and Sierra Designs makes a *Portable Attic* (RRP \$30), which clips into the top of the tent like a mezzanine. *Stuff sacks* are always useful; sturdy, waterproof models cost \$10 or more. *Clux Super Wipes*, available from most supermarkets for about \$2.50 a packet, are ideal for mopping spills, condensation and melted snow from the tent floor.

Once, my expensive tent ended up in a tote bag with a pair of crampons. Holes and tears in nylon tents can be repaired simply and effectively with adhesive nylon *repair tape* from Coghlan's or Kenyon (about \$5.00). Some *Victorinox pocket knives*, such as the Victorinox Climber model (RRP \$38), are equipped with scissors.

Collecting and storing water is more of a chore than usual in the snow. A canvas or nylon *water bucket* from DB Stuff or Paddy Fallon costs less than \$20. An alternative is the *bladder* or cellar-pack variety. Save and rinse

your old wine casks or buy a purpose-built model with a strap for about \$20. DB Stuff, Mont and others make them.

A hot stove will tend to sink into the snow, and will do no good at all for the floor of a tent if used inside. A piece of lightweight plywood, a cork flooring-tile or something similar serves as a *stove support* and doubles as a *chopping board*. Matches all too easily become wet and useless, so take along a *cigarette lighter* or two. The refillable Zippo lighter (RRP \$39.95) burns butane and is a veritable flame-thrower. And to economize on the energy needed for washing-up, get a bowl you can lick clean; saliva is a great natural grease-cutter.

Sleeping in comfort can be an art form. Many items of equipment take on a second role at bed-time. If using a short sleeping mat, rest your feet on your empty pack or that short piece of foam. Put boots behind your head in place of a big pillow, or fill a stuff sack with clothing and pound it a few times with your fist to get it just right.

Finally, what to do with waste? Take a few *grocery or garbage bags* for food scraps, foil wrappers and other rubbish. Don't waste time attempting to burn toilet paper in the snow. Place used paper in a sturdy *zip-lock plastic bag* and bring it out for disposal in an appropriate place.

Always remember that the snow-camping accessory you'll appreciate most is a light pack. Fortunately, most of the things

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mentioned in this survey will fit in the top pocket of your rucksack.

Michael Hampton

Shoe Reshuffle

The *Alico Mountain Ski boot* listed in the Gear Survey in this issue is not the same as the boot advertised under that name last winter. This year's Mountain Ski has a second, outer leather tongue, a layer of Thinsulate in its lining, and a mid-sole of polyurethane. The Alico boot formerly known as the Mountain Ski, which has a single tongue, now goes by the name *Backcountry*. RRP \$265 and \$245, respectively. Imported by *D B Biggs*. See the Gear Survey on page 69 for more details.

Low Gear

Two models of climbing aids for cross-country skiers were tested recently. The *NordiClaw* is a Canadian device made of magnesium alloy. It consists of a pair of freely hinged 'paddles', one of which is mounted behind the heel on each ski and locks into the snow as weight is applied to the ski during the uphill climb. The *NordiClaw* has received favourable reviews in several Northern hemisphere ski mag-

azines. The most significant of these is the arrangement of two zips and three plackets, or overlapping flaps—dubbed 'the Watergate closure'—which seal the garment. Paddy Pallin's designers are confident that this will be weatherproof, reliable and easy to operate. We certainly hope it will do a better cover-up job than the Nixon administration. The *Verve* jacket weighs 660 grams and the *Vector* anorak 480 grams; they sell for RRP \$299 and \$269, respectively, at *Paddy Pallin* shops.



Solar Heating

Three new outer garments from *Wilderness*, the clothing arm of Macpac Wilderness Equipment, are made of Solartek, a lightweight polyester fleece previously used in Wilderness 'mid-wear'. Solartek does not have quite the insulating ability of Polarlite but is significantly lighter. The *Chinook* jacket is reversible and can be worn with either the fleece or a layer of waterproof, breathable Reflex fabric facing out. RRP \$195. The *Spindrift* jacket is lined with a showy, printed polyester; there are matching pants. RRP \$159 and \$89, respectively. The *Crescendo* jacket, in unlined Solarplus, is also new. RRP \$148. Cuffs on all four garments are either of Solartek or Lycra, and all have zipped pockets.

Top Shelf

Outdoor Agencies is importing a selection from the extensive—and expensive—Berghaus clothing range. We've seen four warm tops: the *Cascade zipped jacket* and *short-zipped pullover* in a new, 'two-faced' version of Malden Polarlite; and the *Chinook* jacket and *Tramontana pullover* in a lightweight polyester pile lined with a new 'wind-proof, breathable' fabric called Gore-WS. Prices range from RRP \$249 to \$339. The *Alpine Extrem* (RRP \$599) is a jacket in three-layer Gore-Tex. The *Courmayeur* (RRP \$499) is a short anorak with a hood stowed in its high collar; it and the *Asgard salopettes* (RRP \$599) are made of (mainly) two-layer Gore-Tex with a lining of polyester mesh.

Free Heel, Dry Feet?

Mont Heel Raisers are knee-length gaiters in seam-sealed Gore-Tex—Taslan for the leg, heavy-duty Strata around the foot—which cover the entire boot and are secured with shock-cord round the welt and underneath.

They open at the front with a zip covered by a flap. A webbing tab fits under the bail of a three-pin ski binding and helps to hold the toe of the gaiter in place. *Heel Raisers* sell for around \$130 a pair.

The World on Your Shoulders

The *Berghaus Cyclops II Atlas* is a very big internal-framed rucksack indeed. It's big even without its two detachable side-pockets, which, when removed from the pack, can be zipped together and carried as a day pack. The Atlas is made of 1000-denier nylon and is all triked out with accessory patches, ice-tool attachments, haul loops and compression straps. The fixed-length *Cyclops II* harness was described in *Equipment*, *Wild* no 29. The *Cyclops II Citadel*, also new, is a big pack, too—about the size of an Atlas minus pockets, and with many similar features. Both can be divided into top and bottom compartments if required, and both come in three back-lengths—including a new, extra-long size. RRP \$479 for the Atlas and \$419 for the Citadel. Imported by *Outdoor Agencies*.

The *MEI Denali 1* internal-framed rucksack, made in the USA, has a harness which allows adjustment, not only to the hip-to-shoulder length, but also to the length of the hip-belt and the angle at which this sits on the base of the pack. Many body shapes and sizes are catered for. However, our guess is that smaller wearers might feel somewhat overwhelmed by bulky pads and straps. As with the two Berghaus packs, the large single compartment of the Denali 1 can be divided into two, and there is provision to attach plenty of gear on the outside. The lid and top pocket extend vertically on four straps, and can be removed and carried as a bum bag. RRP \$358. Imported by *D B Biggs*.

Keeping up with the Smiths

The *Mountainsmith* range of *lumber packs* and *rucksacks*, made in the USA and now imported into Australia by *Grant Minervini Agencies*, has a reputation for quality of manufacture and attention to detail—and a price tag to match. The packs have several interesting features. Smaller models, in particular, sit higher on the back than is customary; hence the use of the term 'lumber packs' in preference to 'bum bags'. The broad, unpadded waist-belt (padded on larger models) that secures them to the wearer fastens at around navel-level—again, higher than most. The body of the pack is connected to the 'fins' of the waist-belt by two pairs of straps; on each side (even on small models), one strap angles down from high on the back of the pack and another is attached to the bottom of the pack. Together, these can be used to seat the pack very snugly against the wearer's lower back. The feel of a *Mountainsmith* pack on the back is distinctive; not everyone will like it, or be prepared to make all the adjustments necessary to achieve it every time the pack is put on or taken off, but it is the product of much thought. So are many other aspects of design. To mention a few: harnesses on larger packs can be finely adjusted in many directions; smaller packs can be attached to larger ones as external pockets; lids on larger packs can be detached and carried as *lumber packs*; accessory pouches can be attached to all packs in various



The *NordiClaw*, shown retracted (left) and in position to claw its way uphill. Right, the redesigned *Paddy Pallin Vector* anorak.

azines. It is imported by *Nordic Traders* and sells for RRP \$49. The other device tested, the *Hill Climber*, is made of reinforced plastic and sells for RRP \$58. A spring-loaded double paddle is mounted forward of the toe on each ski. The *NordiClaw* and the *Hill Climber* are ideal for climbing steep slopes where icy or crusty snow makes conventional ski bases relatively inefficient.

Mike Edmondson

Positive Discrimination

New from *Paddy Pallin* is the *Verve*, a *Gore-Tex* jacket tailored for women, with hips cut wider, sleeves shorter, waist draw-cord higher and shoulders smaller than regular *Paddy Pallin* jackets. As well, the *Vector Gore-Tex anorak* has been redesigned. Its large chest-pocket now sits higher and is better protected from the weather; and a cord has been added to the back of the hood to allow adjustment in size.

Both garments are made of three-layer *Scope Gore-Tex* and share several features designed to improve comfort. Perhaps the

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positions. There are more; to appreciate them, see a Mountiansmith pack yourself. All these things add to the versatility of your 'load-carrying system' and also to the complexity of using it. Lumbar packs range in price from around \$95 to \$145, small rucksacks from \$195 to \$280 and full-sized rucksacks from \$375 to \$595.

Swarthy Complexion

The *Skin-Mat* is a lightweight addition to the range of self-inflating sleeping mats from the Spanish manufacturer *Ariach*. As well as its light weight, the *Skin-Mat* has the advantage of a non-slip surface—and hence the potential to forestall many territorial disputes within tents on sloping sites. At first glance the shiny, black expanded polymer of its outer surface resembles something as robust as a garbage bag, but even a tentative examination with a finger nail reveals that it is far more resilient. Only time will tell how much more. The attached instruction booklet cautions the owner to use the *Skin-Mat* only inside a tent—a wise policy with any self-inflating sleeping mat. A 180 centimetre mat weighs just over 500 grams and costs RRP \$99, and a 120 centimetre mat weighs 370 grams and costs RRP \$75. The *Skin-Mat* is about half the thickness of the regular *Ariach* Comfort-mat. Imported by *Outdoor Agencies*.

Defending the Crown

The *UULU* *Venturer* helmet, made in New Zealand, was intended originally for use by rafters, but has also proved suitable for canoeists, cavers and climbers. Its shell consists of a core of high-density polystyrene sandwiched between two layers of durable ABS plastic, and is shaped to protect ears and temples without obstructing hearing. It relies for ventilation and drainage on the clearance between the smooth ABS shell and the adjustable plastic inner cage. The *Venturer* weighs a little under 500 grams and will support a weight of 3.5 kilograms when floating. It meets Australian and New Zealand standards for construction helmets, and NZ standards for cycling (with the exception of the reflectivity requirement) and pony-riding. RRP \$88. Distributed and sold directly by *Wild Country*, Dickson, ACT.

Bright Idea

One obvious solution to the problem of a 'hands-free' portable light is a headlamp (see *Equipment Survey*, *Wild* no 39). Another is to hold a small torch in your mouth—all very well until you want to eat! A third is a *Nite Ize torch holder*—a headband of 25 millimetre tubular nylon webbing, secured with Velcro, to which is sewn a short, elastic sleeve. Instead of chewing on your small torch, slip it into this sleeve and you have the next best thing to a headlamp. *Nite Ize* is made in the USA and imported by *Zen Imports*. RRP \$12.95. For the industrious, a home-made substitute would not be difficult to construct; an elastic insert in the headband itself might be a worthwhile modification.

Treading Lightly

Another lightweight bushwalking boot to add to the list (see *Gear Survey*, *Wild* no 38) is the *Merrell Shadow*. Cut above the ankle, the

Shadow (flits rather than plods?) is otherwise similar to the lower-cut *Merrell Eagle* boot, with a padded, Cordura-and-suede upper and full-bellows tongue. RRP \$169 a pair. Imported by *Nordic Traders*.



Merrell *Shadow* lightweight walking boots.

Five Tennies shoes and *High Fives* boots have uppers of suede, lined with polyester, and outer soles of 5.10 *Stealth* rubber—a material, borrowed from rockclimbing footwear, which gives excellent grip on rock—with a shallow, 'dot-pattern' tread. The shoes sell for RRP \$139 a pair and the boots for RRP \$169 at *Paddy Pallin* shops.

Seeing Double

Heavier than a compact 35 millimetre camera but lighter than most single-lens reflex cameras (once a lens is attached), the new *Minolta Auto-focus binoculars* borrow the automatic focusing mechanism developed for *Minolta*'s *Dynax* cameras. This is powered by a six-volt lithium battery and will function at temperatures between -20° and 50°C; 'battery-driven manual focus' is also possible. Both models—8 x 22 and 10 x 25—measure 137 x 127 x 54.5 millimetres and weigh a little over half a kilogram. The two models sell for around \$500 and \$600 respectively, at most major photographic retailers.

Bon Voyage

Smaller items made by *JanSport* include the *Hippo bum bag*, a small belt pouch called the *Boomer*, and a selection of *wallets*, money belts and hybrids of the two styles. Prices range up to RRP \$55 for the *Hippo*. Imported by *Outdoor Survival*.

Bonchel travel accessories are made in Australia. They include a two-compartment 'body wallet', money belts, pouches worn round the neck—all in discreet, flesh-toned fabrics—and an inflatable pillow for supporting the neck when sleeping while seated. Prices range from RRP \$9.50 to \$12.95. Distributed by *Outdoor Agencies*.

Old News

The *bug lamp* (see *Equipment*, *Wild* no 39) was no news to *Wild* reader Alan Webb of Gympie Bay, New South Wales. He wrote to tell us that he and fellow cavers, then unable to afford acetylene lamps, adopted the idea of the bug lamp after seeing it used by a group of Sunday school picnickers at Wee Jasper, NSW, during the 1960s.

In a postscript, he commented on the photograph on page 15 of the same issue, which accompanied an item about cliff rescue:

'...it is great to see the *Rock Squad* utilizing the best equipment available, including the footwear'. Such a letter could only come from New South Wales: the rescuer pictured is shod in Dunlop Volleys. ■

New products (on loan to *Wild*) and/or information about them, including colour slides, are welcome for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed, include recommended retail prices and preferably not exceed 200 words. Send to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

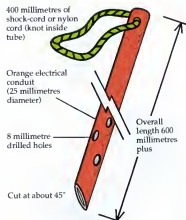
TRIX

No Pegs Like Snow Pegs

An economical way to secure your tent in the snow

Wild reader Warren Feakes of Wanniansa, ACT, wrote to tell us he couldn't see the point in carrying a bundle of 80 centimetre steel shelving brackets to use as snow pegs—as he once saw done—when all that weight could have been replaced with more food!

'Store-bought snow pegs are fine, but expensive', he wrote. 'A simple alternative that has given me two trouble-free seasons so far is to use sections of 25 millimetre extruded plastic electrical conduit, available from most hardware outlets. I chose the tougher, orange version meant for underground use—which has the added advantage of being easy to spot when it's time to pack up.'



'I cut and drilled them to the pattern in the drawing attached. The additional holes increase holding power when the snow packed inside turns to ice. They are extremely light, seem robust enough, slip easily down the side of a rucksack, and—most importantly—are "mortgage-friendly".' *Wild* welcomes readers' contributions to this section. Send your ideas to the address above.



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SOUTH WEST TASMANIA

New edition of this track notes classic

South West Tasmania

by John Chapman (published by the author, third edition, 1990, RRP \$18.95).

This is the third edition of John Chapman's well-known and highly regarded guidebook to selected walks in South-west Tasmania. It is similar in layout to previous editions, but I think many walkers will now feel that the increased size of the book makes it too large to be carried in the pack on walks. (This problem can be overcome by photocopying the sections you need.)

With guidebooks such as *South West Tasmania*, controversy can arise if too much is described. Some walkers feel that there should be no route descriptions published of walks in wilderness areas, as these reduce the challenge of finding your own route. As well, it is highly likely that mention in a guidebook will lead to increased usage. It is certain that this has happened to parts of the South-west, but there is too little information available to say for certain whether tracks and campsites have become more eroded due to larger numbers. Some areas not described in guidebooks have been considerably damaged by the passage of only a few parties.

When I first visited the South-west in 1975 it was almost mandatory to buy a set of 'route guides' printed by the National Parks & Wildlife Service from earlier notes prepared by the Hobart Walking Club. Without these it is certain that our party could not have completed the long walk we did. John Chapman's books have probably enabled many more walkers to enjoy the wilds of South-west Tasmania than otherwise would have.

This edition has been considerably altered. A number of descriptions have been rewritten and most of the photographs have been changed. Although many of these are interesting, they are no real improvement on the photos used in earlier editions. There are additional descriptions of the west coast and Frenchmans Cap. The description of the Frankland traverse, which many walkers felt should not have been included in the second edition, has been cut back severely, and some anomalies, such as the descent from Frankland Peak, have been corrected. Similarly, the west coast description is only suitable for experienced South-west walkers.

Some gripes: as a walker from New South Wales I was disappointed to see in the equipment section that the author regards boots as mandatory. I have used Volley sandshoes for all my summer and autumn walks in the South-west, and can recommend them (although a spare pair should be carried on trips longer than two weeks in very rough country). I also feel that, for high camps in the ranges of the South-west, a tent needs to be windproof as well as waterproof. I would limit the recommended maximum size of parties to



Resting during the ascent of the Ironbound Range, South-west Tasmania, the highest point on the popular South Coast Track. *Chris Baxter*

four people (two tents) in the popular mountain areas. I was surprised not to see pasta in the food section; it is light, cheap and easy to cook on a lightweight stove. No mention is made of the use of 'suck tubes' to obtain water from the many small yabbie-holes up in the mountains. In dry conditions these tubes are a necessity. On some walks, sections which pass through more open terrain—from Haven Lake to Promontory Lake, in the Western Arthurs, for example—are described as 'easier'. I feel it should be emphasized that navigation in open ranges can be difficult in misty conditions—which are by no means rare in the South-west. Many who travel to the South-west like to leave a change of clothes in Hobart. Redline Coaches, as well as Bushwalkers Transport, will stow gear for a nominal charge.

There is a typographical error ('see p xxx') on page 54. The photograph on page 165 is of Federation Peak, not Mt Hopetoun. Some obvious side-trips have been omitted, such as the Hippo—a short diversion from the Precipitous Bluff route—and Dorado Peak, in the Western Arthurs—although the route is marked on the accompanying map. Nor is the very worthwhile Orion-Procyon traverse, also in the Western Arthurs, mentioned in this edition. On the other hand, it is good that the fragile Pandani Shelf route to Mt Anne is not described. The Moraine E route in the Western Arthurs, which I consider to be fairly straightforward, is described as a 'rough, scrubby ridge'.

It has been my experience that bushwalkers like to know as much as possible about the

regions through which they walk. The general sections in Chapman's book are good, but I would like to see a few more points of geological, botanical or historical interest included in the walk descriptions: for example, the reason for the name 'Stuarts Saddle'; the interesting stories surrounding Joe Picone, an early Tasmanian wilderness photographer, who took his own life near Mt Anne; and the origin of such things as the 'mileposts' on the Arthur Plains and the piles of rubbish from long-ago airdrops in some of the ranges.

Route descriptions seem accurate and suggested times are consistent. Once you begin a walk, it is possible to calibrate your own actual walking times against the times given, and to estimate when you will arrive at campsites.

Most of those who visit South-west Tasmania on walking trips will find this guide very useful. There are at least half a dozen ranges, a handful of wild rivers, and various other objectives to tempt walkers who have the necessary experience and don't like guidebooks. I hope that none of them is described in too much detail in the future.

David Noble

The Blue Mountains Mystery Track-Lindeman Pass

by Jim Smith (Three Sisters Productions, 1990, RRP \$15.95).

More than ten years ago, while on a walk led by Barry Higgins on the tops between Glen Davis and Newnes, we came across a short section of an old constructed walkway under a large overhang. Barry, of course, had known of its existence, and called it the 'Inca Pathway', but he did not know how old it was,

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Fabric Heavy cordura	Fabric Heavy cordura	Fabric Heavy cordura	Fabric Heavy cordura
Weight 2.2 kg	Weight 2.1 kg	Weight 1.9 kg	Weight 1.6 kg
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where it went to or who had built it. Such things arouse the curiosity of bushwalkers.

Jim Smith must have had similar feelings when he discovered parts of the old Lindeman Pass track in the Jamison valley near Katoomba. Over a period of years Smith, with the help of a dedicated band of volunteers (in particular, Wilf Hilder), not only found and cleared the path of the old track, but researched its history as fully as seems possible, and has now published his findings in this book (the first of two volumes on the Jamison valley).

Is there enough material to justify a book on just one six-kilometre track? To his credit, Jim Smith has produced a well-researched and interesting book. The story of the struggles of Charles Lindeman and Frank Walford to have the track built and opened for the public is fascinating reading, made more so by many extracts from newspapers and letters from early this century. The author's account of his subsequent efforts to reopen the track, fighting against bureaucratic recalcitrance, is equally compelling. The text is interspersed with black-and-white photographs, many of which have historical interest, and maps showing the location of the track and its access routes.

Similar in style and format to Smith's earlier book on the Six Foot Track (see review on page 71, *Wild* no 16), this one will be a valuable addition to the libraries of bushwalkers and others with an interest in the Blue Mountains. It has probably been printed in only a small run, so snap it up while you can.

DN

Kimberley Challenge

by Terry Bolland (published by the author, 1991, RRP \$10.00 plus \$2.00 postage from 60 Hardy Rd, Ashfield WA 6054).

Like the author, this 64-page, A4-size, magazine-format publication defies ready classification. Even its production is enigmatic: mostly fairly basic black-and-white laser printing, but with eight pages of well-reproduced colour photos (of which some, or ones like them, have been published in *Wild*), almost all of 'our man'.

Largely describing Bolland's several epic and courageous Kimberley trips by land and sea (some of which he has written about in *Wild*), *Kimberley Challenge* also includes liberal doses of biography and homespun philosophy, as well as some good maps, a few advertisements and a number of lists of sponsors, not to mention explanatory appendices on crocodiles and the ocean—one can't complain about variety!

The word 'adventurer' has been overused recently, but it certainly applies to Bolland, many of whose exploits leave you gasping with incredulity and respect in much the same way as Peter Treseader's do. This is an important, and very readable, record of those adventures.

(By way of a footnote, *Kimberley Challenge* serves as a good illustration of the need for the level of advertising found in *Wild*: *Wild* is approximately twice the size, produced to a completely different standard and sells for about half the posted price of *Kimberley Challenge*.)

Chris Baxter

Nepal—A Travel Survival Kit

by Tony Wheeler and Richard Everist (Lonely Planet, 1990, RRP \$16.95).

I once met an old man on a path, somewhere to the north-east of Kathmandu. We exchanged the normal pleasantries of the road and he told me he was going to Nepal. For a moment I thought I had misunderstood him. Then I remembered that not so long before, the people from the foothills of the central and eastern Himalayas had used the name Nepal to refer solely to that culturally and agriculturally rich anomaly of geography, the Kathmandu valley. The newest of Lonely Planet's travel survival kits is titled *Nepal*, and one could almost be forgiven for thinking that it, too, used the name in its old sense. To be fair, though—by concentrating on the Kathmandu valley, this handy and comprehensive guide will prove to be extremely useful to first-time visitors to the country, since they, too, tend only to experience Kathmandu and its immediate surrounds.

Nepal offers some good, basic information for those who wish to venture further, particularly to go trekking. However, if you want to go trekking on your own, you will do better to refer to a more specialized book, such as Stephen Bezuchka's *Trekking in Nepal*. There is good information in *Nepal* on the Terai, an area of the country often neglected by the guidebook genre, and also an up-to-date section on Pokhara. As one expects from Lonely Planet, the many ins and outs of travel to and within Nepal are well documented—even though some of the facts are already outdated.

Whilst the level of information about the Kathmandu valley, particularly that which relates to its complex culture, is excellent, I found some inaccurate claims about the rest of the country. For instance, in the section on National Parks, the areas quoted are smaller than in reality by a factor of ten; some descriptions of places and routes are confusing or wrong; even my name is misspelled! [A common occurrence in international mountaineering periodicals. Editor]

Despite these minor problems, which no doubt will be ironed out in the inevitable second edition, I recommend *Nepal* as a useful guide.

Tim Macartney-Shape

South America on a Shoestring

by Geoff Crowther, Rob Rachowicki and Krzysztof Dydzinski (Lonely Planet, fourth edition, 1990, RRP \$27.95).

In the eyes of the lightweight traveller this title, now in its fourth edition in a decade, has eclipsed the revered and dense *South American Handbook*. Unlike the latter, *South America on a Shoestring* confines itself to the South American continent. Whilst it lacks the detail of books devoted to individual nations, it remains a compact and useful companion for the budget traveller, who may find any further information a burden.

Michael Collie

Window

by Jeannie Baker (Julia MacRae Books, 1991, RRP \$17.95).

As in her earlier book, *Where the Forest Meets the Sea*, Jeannie Baker uses collage construct-

ions to illustrate this story. Pictures speak louder than words, and with no text at all she demonstrates how 'we are changing the face of our world at an alarming and an increasing pace'.

Through the author's note we learn the sobering facts of our destruction. We also learn that we can arrest this if we are all prepared to personally take the responsibility. (See the Editorial on page 3.) We are told:

From the present rates of destruction we can estimate that by the year 2020 no wilderness will remain on our planet, outside that protected in National Parks and reserves. By the same year 2020, a quarter of our present plant and animal species will be extinct if we continue at the current growing rate of change. Already at least two species become extinct each hour. Our planet is changing before our eyes. However, by understanding and changing the way we personally affect the environment, we can make a difference.

Sue Baxter

100 K a Day

film directed and produced by Jo Lane and Sylvie Shaw (Vixen Films, 1990).

100 K a Day investigates a minor mystery: why Robyn Harris and Liz Marsh, two apparently healthy, happy women, should team up and tackle an endurance event such as the 1990 Subaru-Peregrine Winter Classic. It does this with affection, humour and, above all, respect. The pair are followed from their first meeting, as opponents in an earlier event, through their training programme and, finally, the rigours of the Classic itself. Various other people—friends, family, even a psychologist—contribute to the story. I suspect that the many lean, weatherbeaten individuals who attended the special screening I saw already knew the secret that *100 K a Day* tries to locate. For many other viewers—the uninitiated—it will remain an intriguing mystery.

Nick Tapp

Lake Eildon

1:50 000 (Vicmap, 1991, RRP \$7.50).

Whilst this map is of more interest to vehicle campers than bushwalkers, it does include some interesting walking terrain, especially near the Eildon township. These areas include Mt Torbreck and the Rocky Spur, both in the Eildon State Park.

Like others in the Outdoor Leisure series, *Lake Eildon* is a well-printed, full-colour map. *Gleim van der Kuiff*

Other Titles Received

Alaska—A Travel Survival Kit

by Jim DuFresne (Lonely Planet, 1991, RRP \$16.95).

Long Distance Walker's Handbook

by Barbara Blatchford (A & C Black, 1991).

Taiwan—A Travel Survival Kit

by Robert Storey (Lonely Planet, 1990, RRP \$15.95).

Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia—A Travel Survival Kit

by Daniel Robinson and Joe Cummings (Lonely Planet, 1991, RRP \$21.95). ■

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.



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YES, MINISTER

Wild correspondent's 'silly little word games'

I read your magazine with considerable interest and, indeed, rely on a number of your articles and columns for information on what is occurring elsewhere in Australia. I am disturbed that you have accepted, uncritically, several untrue statements about what is happening in New South Wales.

On page 21 of *Wild* no 39 your correspondent, Mr Lembit, asserts that I have refused to make publicly available wilderness assessments by the National Parks & Wildlife Service. This statement is simply factually incorrect. The NSW Cabinet has determined that, after Cabinet considers each wilderness assessment by the NPWS, the document will then be made public. The two documents have been considered by the NSW Cabinet as indicated by Mr Lembit—those relating to the proposed Coolangubra/Genoa wildernesses and the proposed North Washpool wilderness. Both these documents have been made publicly available, contrary to Mr Lembit's assertion. I make no other comment with respect to the North Washpool area as this matter is currently before the NSW Land and Environment Court.

Mr Lembit also asserts that 'New South Wales is experiencing a National Park drought of record proportions'. In so asserting, he is playing a 'word game' which seeks to imply that no areas have been added to the land area administered by the NSW NPWS since March 1988.

This is factually incorrect and, as someone actively involved in the conservation movement in NSW, Mr Lembit ought to be well aware of this fact.

Nearly 200 000 hectares have been added to the estate of the NPWS since March 1988 and several significant new nature reserves of approximately 30 000 hectares each are contained within this total.

Mr Lembit and some of his colleagues in the NSW conservation movement would prefer that I indulged their 'little word games' and, instead of adding, as I have done, 30 000 hectares to the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park or to the Gibraltar Range National Park, declared these areas 'new National Parks' and gave them resonant and high-sounding names.

This would have achieved the 'little word game' goal of declaring new National Parks. I preferred to take the responsible decision and add them to the existing adjacent National Parks, as they were not separate and discrete areas. I have not been tempted to call these areas 'new National Parks', rather than additions to existing National Parks, and I do not propose to succumb to this purely for the purposes of 'silly little word games' in the future.

Mr Lembit also chooses to ignore the fact that the NSW Government has announced that, in the first half of 1991, at least five new National Parks and one significantly sized

new nature reserve will be created in south-eastern NSW.

I respect your publication and I would appreciate your noting my wish that, in the future at least, your NSW correspondent might choose to reflect more accurately what is, in fact, happening in this State.

Tim Moore, MP
Minister for the Environment
The New South Wales Government
Sydney, NSW

Roger Lembit replies: While Mr Moore disputes points made in my items in Wild no 39, the fact remains that the Coalition Government has a poor record on issues of concern to Wild readers, notably National Parks and wilderness.

The areas added to National Parks and nature reserves over the past few years are as follows:

1987-88 212 245 hectares (Source: NPWS Annual Reports)
1988-89 113 765 hectares
1989-90 42 468 hectares
1990-91 5 000 hectares (6 months to 31 December) (Source NSW Government Gazette)

It is clear that the rate of National Park dedication has slowed markedly in New South Wales. When it is considered that the 200 000 hectares that Mr Moore claims credit for is predominantly made up of proposals which were well advanced before the election of the Coalition, their record is nothing to be proud of. Surely, the fact that we are now experiencing the longest period without a new National Park since 1967 is a further indictment of the Coalition's record rather than a 'silly little word game'.

Wild has given extensive coverage to the issue of woodchipping in south-eastern New South Wales. The five new National Parks and one nature reserve referred to by Mr Moore represent the Government's response to the campaign to protect significant ecosystems in the woodchip concession area. The much maligned Unsworth Labor Government had previously promised to reserve a far greater area. There is no guarantee that the new National Parks will come to fruition, as their creation has been tied to the passage of resource security legislation. This legislation is opposed by conservation groups and is likely to be blocked by the Upper House in NSW.

On the issue of wilderness, Mr Moore has been unsuccessful in his attempts to persuade Cabinet that forest areas in Coolangubra and North Washpool should be recognized under the Wilderness Act. He refuses to make the NPWS's wilderness reports public prior to Cabinet decisions, whereas many other major land-use documents, such as State and Regional Environmental Plans, are made available for public debate before final decision making. In Victoria a similar process occurs with reports of the Land Conservation Council.

New South Wales is lucky to have had a series of environment ministers deeply committed to the cause of National Parks and wilderness.

Regrettably, Mr Moore's personal commitment has not been able to overcome the prejudice of his National Party colleagues.

Tent Time Warp

I have only recently got back into walking after a long absence, and so devoured the summer tent survey in *Wild* no 39.

I find to my dismay that the A-frame tents of my youth no longer exist. They were light, reasonably waterproof and could be pitched in a variety of ways, depending on the weather. An A-frame with walls is still recommended by the 1988 Paddy Pallin book and by Milo Dunphy in 1980. Alas, you can't buy one now.

I would be interested in your readers' comments. Am I just behind the times, or is someone missing a market?

Keith Binns
Yagoona, NSW

Another Stamp of Success

I read the item on page 19 of *Wild* no 40 about the Australia Post 65-cent 'climbing' stamp with interest. My experiences were similar, but different, from those described. Here's what happened. In January 1990, Australia Post released a 5-cent 'kayaking and canoeing' stamp. In March 1990, I received a parcel with an array of stamps on it, including the 5-cent stamp mentioned. Being a white-water guru from way back, the stamp caught my eye, and then my memory. I thought, 'Hey, that's one of my photographs'. A quick check of my *Wild* binders (good value, those binders) produced Australia Post's 'artwork'—my centre spread of a white-water canoe in action, from *Wild* no 11, faithfully copied, right down to the paddler's attire...

This experience with 'climbing' and 'kayaking and canoeing' stamps goes to show what a good magazine *Wild* is, an invaluable reference source for many organizations for many years to come! Now if I can just find that centre spread of a skier...

Chris McLaughlin
Hampton, Vic

It doesn't end there, Chris. The paddler in the foreground of the same stamp bears an uncanny resemblance to the one on pages 46-7 of Wild no 9.

Editor



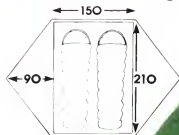
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Speaking out for the Bush

Victorian bushwalkers, ski tourists and similar groups are losing important decisions that could be favourable to their sports, without a whimper. This may be true in other States and Territories, too. It may be tempting to spend all one's time enjoying your recreation and the comradeship of the wild, but that enjoyment is under siege from increasing road access, larger four-wheel-drive and horse-riding groups, and exploitative pressure from loggers, graziers and miners. The purpose of this letter is to illustrate this and to encourage readers to do something about it.

When it comes to policy making, bushwalkers are virtually nowhere to be seen. Land managers who determine the future of our bushwalking areas frequently ask me: Where are the bushwalking groups? Why don't they participate, and do they know what they are losing? For example, in response to the Victorian Alpine National Park draft management plans, the following issues attracted attention in submissions (generally in favour of the topic cited):

Percentage of submissions	
Roads and vehicle access	69
Four-wheel-driving	41
Camping	32
Four-wheel-drive form letter	25
Huts	23
Deer hunting	22
Horse-riding	17
Walking and walking tracks	12
Cross-country skiing	2

This means that proposals in favour of walkers and ski tourists are likely to be dropped as a result of criticism by other interest groups. These proposals include limits on the size of horse-riding groups, prevention of horse-riding on some important walking tracks, closure of some vehicle tracks and protection of wilderness areas. Unless bushwalkers and ski tourists participate in government processes, they will not be heard and their interests will not be properly considered. One or two submissions from peak bodies is not good enough. Managers cannot justify decisions in favour of walkers and ski tourists if we do not call for and support such action.

There are three key Victorian Government processes we should be involved in: 1 Land Conservation Council studies that decide how public land is used, such as the current wilderness study. 2 National Park management plans that determine access and facilities provided in parks such as the Victorian Alpine National Park. 3 Forest Management Plans that determine access and facilities provided in public land outside parks, such as the Otways.

Similar processes exist in other States and Territories. No matter where you live, one way of being very effective is to write a letter after each trip describing the good and bad things you saw. Bushwalking and ski touring clubs should make this a practice after every trip. Other recreational groups do this and it strongly influences departmental decision making. For maximum effect, send your letters to the minister (in Victoria: Steve Crabb, Minister for Conservation & Environment, PO

Box 41, East Melbourne, Vic 3002); they will then be passed on to the regional department staff concerned.

If you find examples of poor management or if you get an unsatisfactory reply to your letter, send a copy to the shadow minister (The Hon M Birrell, MLC, Parliament House, Spring St, Melbourne, Vic 3002).

Don't be discouraged by bureaucratic or negative replies. Despite appearances, these letters do have a big effect. Often, a very few letters are enough to prompt appropriate action.

You could do nothing in the belief that conservation groups or others will do it for you. The reality is that if those who enjoy rucksack sports do not stand up for their interests, then their interests will not be protected.

If you want advice in Victoria on participating in these processes or reporting problems you find in the bush, contact the Victorian National Parks Association on (03) 650 8296.

Jamie Pittcock
Wilderness Campaign Officer
Victorian National Parks Association
Melbourne, Vic

Ranger Bashing

In *Wildfire* in *Wild* no 40, D Naylor complains about 'ranger-bashing' by David Noble on the issue of use of skidoos in Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales. Complaints to the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs over the past year indicate that David Noble has raised a justifiable concern.

The many incidents reported to the confederation include joy-riding in the Pilot and Jagungal wilderness areas and the use of a skidoo to view a sunset from Carruthers Peak—hardly essential management operations.

The confederation believes that the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service should implement guidelines covering use of over-snow vehicles in Kosciuszko National Park. These guidelines should incorporate a ban on the use of over-snow vehicles in wilderness areas; they should require that vehicles be driven in a conservative manner to reduce danger to the public and to reduce fuel consumption; and they should clearly define the circumstances in which use outside resort areas is appropriate.

No one in the conservation movement would deny that rangers have a difficult job with heavy demands on their time. Nevertheless, their position should not be used as an excuse to put them above members of the public who, rightly, are not permitted to use motorized transport in wilderness areas. In these days of concern about the atmospheric implications of excessive energy use, surely rangers should be seeking to reduce their use of fossil fuels. If they can't refrain from using motorized transport in wilderness areas unnecessarily, what hope is there of limiting fuel use by the general public?

Parties using wilderness areas should seek to be self-reliant, even in an emergency. To rely on motorized transport for rescue is a failure to use the wilderness on its own terms.

Roger Lembit
Hazelbrook, NSW

Ten Years On

Congratulations on your tenth anniversary edition. Please keep up the good work.

The 'hill' tackled by 'Nick and the Tappers' (page 54, *Wild* no 40) was Mt Buller, wasn't it, huh?

Another thing. Was it pure coincidence that cutting out the competition coupon (page 6, *Wild* no 40) very neatly removed Chris Baxter's signature from the Editorial—a coup in the air, perhaps?

Andrew Ferguson
Little Billabong, NSW

I know what it takes to produce print: congratulations on your magazine. It's absolutely first class by world standards.

David Thomas
Paddington, NSW

I wish to congratulate you and your staff on achieving the tenth anniversary of *Wild*. I have lived and/or trekked in a fair number of countries and sought good-quality magazines on wilderness activities, and have found *Wild* to be by far the best in both presentation and content.

I gain most enjoyment from Track Notes but find the balance between subjects is just right. With this letter is an order for two back issues. When completed I will be the proud owner of a full set. I look forward to meandering through the pages of future issues for a long time to come.

Anton von Sierakowski
Karratha, WA

After skimming through the anniversary issue (*Wild* no 40), I was wondering whether you should rename your magazine *Chris*. I was very disappointed when I found there were only seven small photos of the Managing Editor—but no centrefold.

Tim Shillington
Red Hill, ACT

PS I do enjoy your magazine.

This disappointment has affected you more than you realize, Tim. There are, in fact, eight, not seven, photos of your hero in Wild no 40. You've apparently overlooked the photo in the advertisement on page 108—see encouraged Spelan to slip it in to ease your suffering following the failure of your application for the position of fan-club secretary. Editor

She'll Be Right

Over Easter, I joined the throngs wandering the Mt Howitt region of the Victorian high country. From this brief trip, two major concerns arose.

My first impression was the poor level of equipment carried and worn by hikers, particularly those on 'day walks' from Howitt Hut and Howitt Spur car-parks. I spoke to about five groups heading for the top of Mt Howitt who were without any waterproof jacket or headgear, let alone anything suitable for the (inevitable) howling gale at the summit. Unbelievably, I was twice informed: 'She'll be right, mate. No problems.' Talk about famous last words!

A second worry was the three groups encountered (in these cases, pretty well equipped, clothing wise), who had embarked

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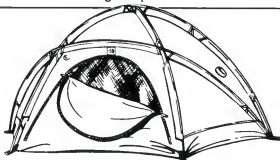
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on longer walks without adequate maps (or compasses); significantly, each group produced John Sisman's fine book on the area, feeling that this was sufficient. Yes, it is a great book, but the small maps are no match for VMTC's *Watersheds of King, Huonqua and Jamieson Rivers*, or the *Mansfield and Howitt* Natmap sheets (or any other similar maps), which more clearly indicate contours and likely water sources.

Do people have to learn the hard way about the dangers of being poorly equipped and insufficiently informed when they venture into the bush? I really don't know how the former group can be educated, but perhaps the latter folk, who showed at least some nous and appreciation of planning, may be reached through the pages of *Wild*.

Come on folks, wise up. Bushwalking is a simple and wonderful activity, but proper planning and attention to basics is essential, particularly if you are venturing into the high country.

Tony Dermody
Bayswater North, Vic

Unsubstantiated, Sweeping Generalizations

It saddens and frustrates us that *Wild* Editorials (nos 34 and 39) continue to critique [sic] and ridicule the issue of accreditation and wilderness management with unsubstantiated, sweeping generalizations in such a negative way...The issues should not be polarized and simplified to the extent they have been. It is disappointing when someone such as Chris Baxter, whose experience and position could offer such a guiding voice, provides little but negative critique from what would appear to be a very hypocritical position. To be colloquial, 'You cannot have your cake and eat it too'.

There has obviously been an increasing interest in the outdoors during the last decade (as the increase in the number of *Wild* subscribers would indicate). With this increased demand have come outdoor magazines and commercial operators—for better or worse. This has seen more people out 'bush', thus increasing pressure on natural area management, resulting in rules and regulations. Welcome to the twentieth century! Australia has reached the point where the great outdoors is no longer limitless and so needs to be managed, a practice that has been common in overseas countries for years.

With this increase in provision has come the call for a more professional outdoor education industry. Accreditation, one of the more contentious elements, was originally provided through volunteer organizations such as the Scouts and the Victorian Bushwalking and Mountaineering Leadership Training Board long before commercial programmes called for it. With an established interest and an increasingly litigious society, like it or not, it would appear that accreditation will continue to grow.

It would seem incredibly shortsighted of *Wild*, given current trends, not to constructively join the debate and provide a unified sounding board and voice for outdoor enthusiasts to help guide and direct this process. This would require diplomacy and constructive critique rather than berating un-

seen bureaucrats and promoting outright confrontation with commercial interests. Given *Wild*'s commitment to the commercialization of the outdoors through advertising and listing of outdoor programmes and organizations, its position would seem to be very hypocritical.

The increase in interest in the outdoors should, we believe, be viewed as a positive opportunity to increase the voice for wilderness and educate a wider section of the community in the process. Guidance for such practices needs a voice like *Wild* to present the issues in a sound, informed way. We hope that *Wild* can respond to the changes that outdoor enthusiasts face in the future.

Mark Darby and Stephen Wearing
School of Leisure & Tourism Studies
University of Technology Sydney
Lindfield, NSW

We have received a total of two letters (both from people with a commercial interest in outdoor activities) opposing the views expressed in the two Editorials in question. Editor

Defending His Territory

As manager of the Great North Walk, I was interested to read Michael Smith's entertaining account of his 12-day trip in *Wild* no 39. I congratulate Michael on walking the entire 250 kilometres from Sydney to Newcastle—a feat he accomplished before the track was even finished.

I was, however, disappointed by Michael's unreasonable assessment of the walk. The Great North Walk is not 'a narrow strip of public land', as Michael depicts, and I don't think it is fair to say that there 'is hardly an unspoiled place in its length'. In fact, the walking track connects impressive areas of Crown reserve, National Parks, State forests, rural lands and urban bush. For example, the newly completed section between Berowra Waters and Cowan provides access to charming sandstone country that many people would not know existed. The walk is quite rugged in places, yet it remains Australia's most accessible long-distance track.

Michael points out that some sections in Sydney are degraded. Was he hoping to find wilderness along the Lane Cove River or at Hornsby? It is a sad fact that pollution is sometimes evident in urban bush and I hope this serves to educate Australians about the vulnerability of our scarce natural resources.

The Great North Walk is becoming a highly valued asset for the people of New South Wales. It is designed to provide a wide range of experiences and our visitor surveys continue to demonstrate wide public support. I hope the Great North Walk can be enjoyed by readers of *Wild* just as much as it is enjoyed by average urbanites.

Rick Noble
for Secretary
Department of Lands
Sydney, NSW

Readers' letters are welcome (with sender's full name and address, for verification). A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.



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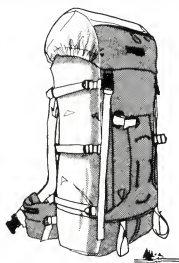
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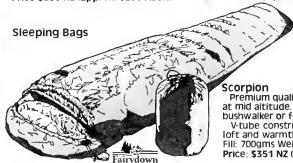


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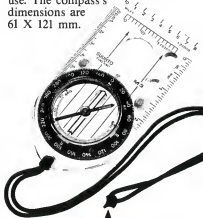
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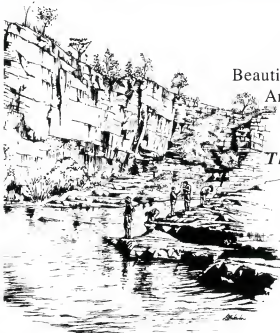
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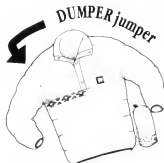
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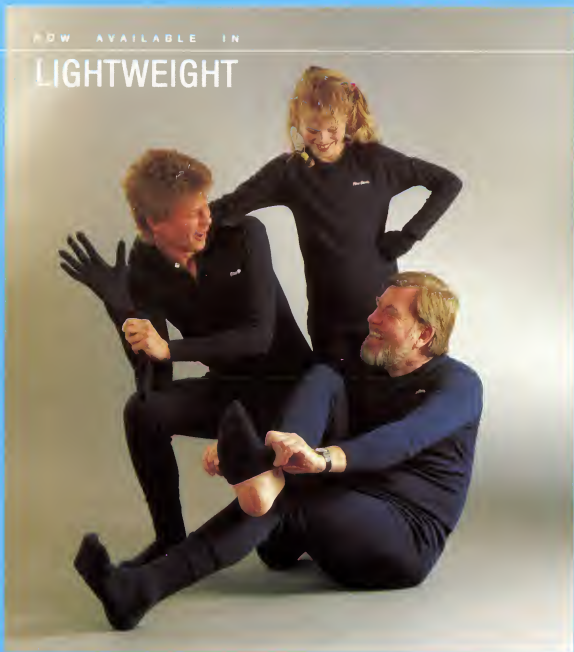


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